SKELMERSDALE
Champion

8 February 2017 Vol 24 • Issue 6 www.champnews.com

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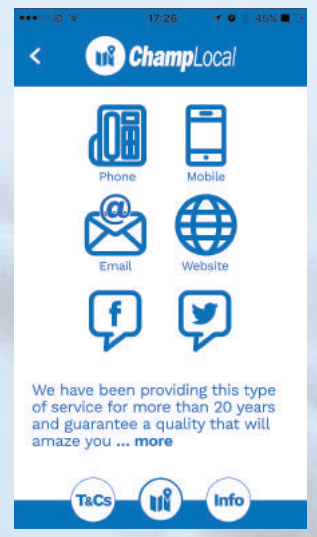

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Savvy pupils shine in Premier League challenge

Men-Aces' Ste earns call-up for Team GB Euro squad

'Rail link will bring economic boom' - 10 years down the line!

LANCASHIRE County Council's transport chief, John Fillis has said that following confirmation of the preferred site for the town's railway station ***(see story inside)***, Skelmersdale is "getting ready to boom".

However, he added that the project - which he estimates will cost in the region of £200m - will not be completed until seven to 10 years down the line!

Councillor Fillis said: "Skelmersdale is getting ready to boom. Our railway plans fit in with development of the rail service across the North West.

"The new train line would allow people to get to Liverpool, Manchester, Wigan, which is a proposed HS2 station and Preston."

The county council has put together a business case and are applying for the £200m needed to build the station through the government growth deal.

Cllr. Fillis added: "The station would double the population of Skelmersdale from 40,000 to 80,000, which is the size the town was meant to be. It would make Skelmersdale into a major commuter town and link it up with the golden triangle of Liverpool, Manchester and Preston.

"The station would also provide major opportunities for business and offer both a rail and motorway link.

"The current estimate of the cost of the scheme is around £200m. This is a very rough estimate to provide the track, bridges and station facilities. Lancashire County Council is prepared to invest £4m in preparation work - station location, land assembly and site clearance being the first step. We have started with a lot of work to be done over the next five years and a very rough completion date of seven to 10 years."

County council bosses hope to get on to the site of the former Glenburn Sport College by the end of this month and flatten the buildings which have been targeted by vandals.

ASSURANCES SOUGHT OVER TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION

MP contacts developer about absence of Skelmersdale project from company report

Report by **Henry James**

WEST Lancs MP Rosie Cooper has expressed "disappointment" that there is no mention of St Modwen's £10m proposed scheme to regenerate Skelmersdale town centre in the company's annual results for its North West division.

And she has contacted the developers seeking assurances that they are committed to the project.

It is now more than 10 years since St Modwen were appointed by English Partnerships to be the preferred developer for the redevelopment of Skelmersdale.

Fresh hope of a long-awaited start to the project was raised last December when a legal challenge, submitted by the owners of the town's Concourse shopping centre who were proposing an alternative scheme, was blocked.

However, the St Modwen development has yet to break ground.

A statement released this week by St Modwen showed pre-tax profits down from £235.2m to £66.9m.

The document, written by North West regional director, Steven Knowles, includes information on a number of projects in the region but there is no mention of Skelmersdale.

There are details of a scheme at Great Homer Street in Liverpool and mention also of how the company has signed a development agreement with Knowsley Council to bring forward the development of Kirkby town centre.

St Modwen regional director Steven Knowles

The construction of an 18,000 sq ft development for discount supermarket group Aldi at Vulcan in Newton-Le-Willows is also included.

Meanwhile, Mr Knowles goes on to talk about plans for Wigan and adds: "We have also successfully secured planning permission for two key sites. Consent was granted for 325 new family homes at Wigan Enterprise Park, which we are now bringing forward for development.

"We also sold the first tranche of housing land at Cromwell Road in Ellesmere Port for the development of 350 new homes."

He also looks to the future with references to projects at Bury and Crosby, but again no mention of Skelmersdale.

When the Champion asked St Modwen why Skelmersdale had not been mentioned, a spokeswoman for the company commented: "St. Modwen remain committed to bringing forward this significant regeneration scheme and are working with our partners, West Lancashire Borough Council and Homes and Communities Agency on a time frame for delivery."

Responding to the statement, Rosie Cooper commented: "It is rather disappointing that there is no mention by St Modwen of the Skelmersdale town centre redevelopment project in their annual report.

"I appreciate that the project was on hold for most of the last year due to the legal challenge by the Concourse shopping centre owners to stop the redevelopment from happening.

"I have contacted St Modwen seeking assurances that now the legal situation is successfully resolved that they are getting a move on with the Skelmersdale town centre project."

West Lancs Borough Council have been contacted for comment but at the time of going to press they had not got back to us.

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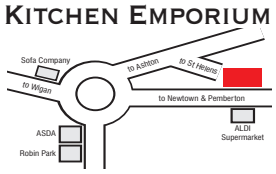

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Edge Hill accused of 'lack of transparency'

University says failure to respond to FoI request was due to oversight

Report by **Henry James**

EDGE Hill University has been labelled one of the 'least transparent' in the UK by the University and College Union (UCU).

It follows an alleged failure by the Ormskirk university to provide details of its vice-chancellor's pay and perks in response to a Freedom of Information request from the union.

However, a spokeswoman for Edge Hill said this was down to an "oversight" and arrangements had now been made to rectify the situation.

She also pointed out that senior staff remuneration was reported in the university's annual accounts which is a public document.

Edge Hill was one of just eight out of 161 universities which did not respond to the UCU request and was, said the union, "something of a serial offender having also refused to respond last year."

The union has reported Edge Hill to the Information Commissioner and asked that it completes its statutory duty by replying to the union.

Five universities used FoI exemptions to avoid answering any of the questions.

UCU said greater sanctions were needed to ensure universities justified some of the "largesse" that it said has embarrassed higher education in recent years. It has called for a national register of senior pay and perks in UK universities.

And it said any university that claimed the answers to its questions were available online had either not read the questions properly or was being deliberately misleading.

Sanctions

UCU will release its latest pay and perks survey later this month and said that universities should not escape the spotlight by refusing to answer legitimate questions about how they spend public money.

UCU general secretary, Sally Hunt, said: "Freedom of Information legislation is important in holding universities that spend millions of pounds of public money to account.

"It is not acceptable for Edge Hill and a handful of other universities to refuse to comply with the law and dodge Freedom of Information requests. We believe the time has come for a national register of pay and perks in our universities. The information we requested is not available online and any university that suggests it is either did not read the request properly or is being deliberately misleading.

"We have written to the Information Commissioner's Office and we would like to see greater sanctions on those universities that blatantly ignore these requests or try to wriggle out of their responsibilities with exemptions."

The spokeswoman for Edge Hill commented: "The university had received the FoI request from UCU, however, due to an oversight while the questionnaire was completed it was not returned to UCU as requested.

"The university having now been made aware of this has arranged for the return to be sent to UCU immediately.

"As in previous years senior staff remuneration is reported in Edge Hill University's annual accounts which is a public document, published and available to everyone on the university website."

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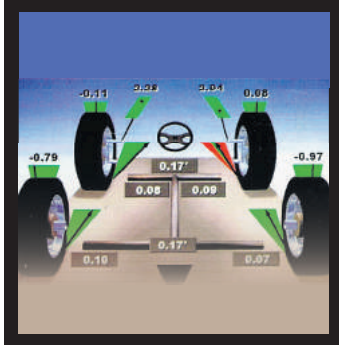

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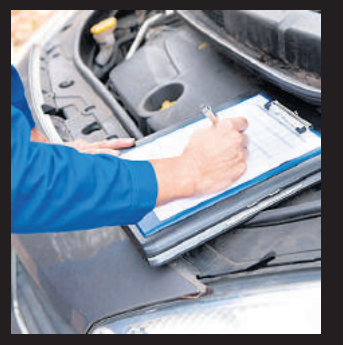

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Former college site confirmed as preferred location for town's proposed rail station

Report by **Henry James**

County Councillor Fillis by the former Westbank Campus site. The former Glenburn Sports College is nearby

THE former Glenburn Sports College/Westbank Campus site has been confirmed as the preferred location for the long-awaited railway station in Skelmersdale.

The choice was made by Lancashire County Council, in partnership with West Lancashire Borough Council and Merseytravel.

It follows a comparative assessment of two possible sites, identified in an earlier study by Network Rail.

The assessment, commissioned by the county council and carried out by Network Rail, looked at the former Glenburn Sports College/Westbank Campus site and a site next to the Concourse shopping centre.

County Councillor John Fillis, Lancashire's cabinet member for highways and transport, said: "This is a really exciting step forward in the process of bringing a railway station to Skelmersdale.

"This was a comprehensive study and clearly identified the Glenburn Sports College and Westbank Campus site as the most suitable option. The site is big enough to provide a high-quality station with scope to expand to meet future demand. It has good highway access and good connectivity to the town and the surrounding area.

"There is still a long way to go on this project but identifying the right site is a really significant milestone on the way."

The announcement of a preferred site for the location of a railway station in the town has been welcomed by West Lancs MP Rosie Cooper who said it marks "the next step" towards the transformation of the town.

She believes the choice of the former college site means future rail services can be brought into the heart of Skelmersdale's town centre.

She commented: "The people of Skelmersdale will be delighted a site for the railway station has been identified and this project continues to move forward - although only once there is a new railway station in Skelmersdale and one that is in the town centre can we truly celebrate.

"For now though this is another step in the right direction towards that goal.

"I have consistently said that a railway station in the heart of Skelmersdale will open up a world of economic and social opportunities for the town and its residents.

"Slowly the face of Skelmersdale is beginning to change. It has a new further education college. We should begin to see work start on the town centre redevelopment at last; add to that a railway station connecting the town into Liverpool, Manchester and beyond, now Skelmersdale begins to look like a 21st century town and it is nothing more than the people and the town deserve.

"I will continue campaigning and fighting to ensure that the identification of a site for a railway is not where this ends."

The study assessed the potential station sites against a number of criteria. These included impact on the highway; good pedestrian and cycle access; ability to provide a park and ride sufficient for 250 vehicles but capable of expansion to cater for up to 500; ability to provide a set down and pick up area; ability to provide a station building with good passenger and staff accommodation; potential to provide good bus interchange; good connectivity to the town centre/residential areas; and the ability to act as a catalyst for regeneration.

Councillor John Hodson, West Lancs Council's cabinet member for planning, said: "The identification of the preferred location for a railway station is an important step in a major project for the people of Skelmersdale and the borough council looks forward to working with the county council to ensure the station is built."

The former Glenburn Sports College closed on August 31 2016. The site is owned by Lancashire County Council. The former Westbank Campus is owned by Newcastle College, which merged with Skelmersdale and Ormskirk College in 2007. Both sites are currently unused.

The county council will now start the process of acquiring the relevant land.

The pupils who took part in the challenge

Business-savvy pupils pipped in Premier League Enterprise Challenge

A GROUP of young students from Skelmersdale demonstrated their business skills at the Premier League Enterprise Challenge regional play-offs at Manchester City's Etihad Stadium.

Representing Wigan Athletic, the Lathom High School Year 9 pupils responded to a challenge set by Premier League executive chairman Richard Scudamore about ways to increase the club's international fan base and presence in the USA.

Having won the local heat of the competition in December, they competed against four other clubs from the North West, and presented their idea of approaching a major soft drink company about forming a strategic partnership with the club to a panel of industry experts.

And they just missed out on first place, finishing second.

Team member, Charlotte Bennett, said: "The Premier League Enterprise Challenge has really changed my life. It's improved my confidence as a person and my presentation skills have become better too. It'll definitely help me in the future."

She added: "We've done amazing to get this far and we'll all take so much out of the experience. We've become closer friends and have had fantastic support from teachers at our school and staff at Wigan Athletic Community Trust."

The Premier League Enterprise Challenge is a national competition that gives young people of secondary school age the chance to work with their local professional football clubs on an actual football business challenge set by Richard Scudamore.

The Latics Enterprise Academy Programme uses the model of a professional football club to develop young people's understanding of business and enterprise. As part of the course, students are able to work towards a national recognised qualification and will improve their attitude, motivation, communication and enterprise capabilities.

Jane Galbraith, headteacher at Lathom High School, said: "I'm immensely proud of the pupils who have represented our school. They've all grown individually, and they've become even more articulate by being able to perform under pressure and answer demanding questions."

The mayor takes up the accordian challenge at the Irish-themed night at Skelmersdale United Football Club.

Irish night raises £250 for mayor's appeal

AN Irish Night staged at Skelmersdale Football Club raised more than £250 for the Mayor of West Lancashire's charity appeal.

Singer Michael Coyne provided the main entertainment at the event and as well as the music and dancing there were refreshments for people to enjoy - including a tasty Irish stew!

During her year of office the mayor, Councillor Liz Savage, is supporting four causes - the neonatal unit at Ormskirk Hospital; the Artz Centre, Birch Green; The Civic in Ormskirk and the Birchwood Centre, Skelmersdale.

CCTV team's key role in keeping borough safe

MEMBERS of West Lancs Council's CCTV team have been helping catch suspected drink-drivers and thieves during the Christmas period.

The cameras are monitored 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and operators provide valuable assistance in preventing and solving crime.

During December there were 10 arrests for drink-related incidents, including four for suspected drunk driving, which the CCTV operators assisted with. This was either by spotting the offenders or tracking them once they had received information from the police.

And during November the team had previously helped with six arrests for suspected drunk driving.

In total the operators helped the police make 34 arrests in December, including nine for suspected thefts such as shoplifting, and six related to neighbourhood incidents.

They also provided a lot of other useful information to the constabulary, including helping with searches for missing persons.

Councillor Kevin Wright, West Lancs Council's portfolio holder for community safety, said: "The latest statistics show how effective our CCTV system and operators can be in helping to keep crime low in West Lancashire and our communities safe.."

In 2015/16 the CCTV unit was involved in 5,110 incidents. In addition to the 337 arrests that the CCTV operators assisted with, a number of the incidents also resulted in the police or PCSOs being able to intervene at an early stage to prevent trouble from escalating into something more serious.

Between November 2015 and November 2016, the operators played a key role in increasing road safety by advising the police of 84 incidents involving suspected drunk drivers.

Operators keep in close contact with local businesses and the police through the Shopwatch radio scheme.

Motorway crash

POLICE were called to reports of a road traffic collision close to Junction 4 of the M58 by Skelmersdale at around 11.45am on Friday, February 3.

A Land Rover had collided with a barrier and turned on its side and onto an embankment.

The driver suffered minor injuries and the vehicle was later recovered.

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Rail union to hold strike ballot over guard dispute

Report by **Tom Martin**

RAIL union chiefs have called for a ballot to take industrial action over a dispute with Merseyrail who want to operate a new fleet of trains without guards.

Meetings have been held between the RMT union and the rail operator with the union demanding that there should be a guard on every new train.

Merseyrail say their new fleet has been designed to operate without guards, and they can't guarantee that the role will be needed.

A meeting between Merseyrail chiefs and the RMT union, on Wednesday, February 1 failed to reach agreement on the issue and a ballot for industrial action will be held.

Merseyrail say that any current guards who are no longer needed would be offered another position within the company.

They will also retain the same pay and the associated pay conditions in the new role.

Merseytravel announced in December that the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority had authorised the procurement of the new fleet for the Merseyrail network.

Jan Chaudhry-van der Velde, Merseyrail's managing director, said: "Ensuring passengers feel safe and secure continues to be the number one priority, and the new fleet will see the creation of around 60 customer service positions, working on-board the new trains, to assist and reassure passengers.

One of the new of trains

"All forms of train despatch, whether with or without a guard, require appropriate safety control measures.

"With these in place, evidence from the industry safety authorities demonstrates that the safety record of trains without guards is as good as those with guards. We are disappointed that strikes on our network appear more likely, but respect the union's right to take lawful industrial action.

"We remain committed to avoiding a strike, and emphasised to the RMT that we are keen to continue negotiations with them.

"Irrespective of whether industrial action takes place or not, passengers remain at the heart of everything we do, and this will continue to be the case, should we face strikes.

"We will now focus our attentions on preparing for possible strike days, and attempt to run a service which will cause as little disruption as possible to our customers."

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Men-Aces' star Ste earns place in Team GB squad for Euro tournament

Report by **Henry James**

SKEM Men-Aces player Ste Rimmer has been chosen to represent Team GB in the European Mencap tournament to be staged in Geneva in the summer.

He was one of six members of the Men-Aces squad invited for trials at Knaresborough in Yorkshire and everyone connected with the club was delighted when he was named in the 15-man party selected to fly out to Switzerland in June.

Now they are busy organising fundraising events to cover the costs of Ste's trip and are appealing for donations of raffle and tombola prizes.

Mim Eaton from the Men-Aces said: "We are on Cloud Nine once again.

"We had an early start on the day of the trials with almost Arctic conditions as the lads eagerly climbed into the minibus for the trip to Yorkshire.

"None of the lads had ever experienced a day like this and didn't know what to expect.

"We were met by Team GB coaches and warm handshakes were exchanged. Then the lads were split up and we sent them on their way with a warm smile, a pat on the back and a thumbs-up.

Club launches campaign to fund trip to Geneva

"All that we have taught them about respect, manners and fair play was noticeable both on and off the pitch and the level of football was a pleasure to watch.

"And when Ste Rimmer's name was read out I threw my arms around him and hugged him so hard. All the hard work and determination had finally paid off.

Serious

"All our players did well and the level of football was a testament to their clubs and especially to the players themselves.

"Now the serious training and getting fit starts. Ste will attend training camps with the rest of the squad in South Wales before flying out to Geneva in June.

"Meanwhile we are fundraising to help Ste get to Geneva so if you see us outside Asda come and say hello and show your support. We are looking for donations of raffle, or tombola prizes."

For more details of how to help go to www.skem-men-aces.org.

Geneva here I come .... Skem Men-Aces' Ste Rimmer (left) pictured with the other players who took part in the Team GB trials

MP accuses government of trying to fund early years education on the cheap

ROSIE Cooper has accused the government of failing pre-school children by trying to fund high-quality early years education on the cheap.

The West Lancs MP was speaking in a Parliamentary debate on Maintained Nursery School Funding and later raised the issue again today in the Commons directly with the Secretary of State during Education Questions.

Ms Cooper said: "Maintained nursery schools are very much the jewel in the crown of early years education provision. 60 per cent of these nursery schools are rated as 'outstanding' by Ofsted, including Moorgate Nursery School in Ormskirk.

"In recent months government has been consulting on funding for the early years sector. Initial indications are that they want to fund all providers – maintained nursery schools, private nurseries, childminders, pre-school nurseries etc.- at the same rate.

West Lancs MP Rosie Cooper

"This would be fair if all providers had to operate by the same rules and standards. There are important differences which are not considered in the proposed funding reforms.

"Maintained nursery schools provide early years education rather than just childcare. They are also schools and must employ qualified teachers. Yet they are not funded in the same way as schools but instead through the early years funding formula.

"Local authorities have the power to fund nursery schools on a different basis than other providers but they are under no obligation to do so following government changes in the funding of local authorities.

"The government has offered maintained nursery schools transitional funding as the new funding formula is introduced but many schools fear this is not sufficient for the long-term to keep many nursery schools open."

Speaking after the debate, the West Lancs MP commented: "To date government has demonstrated a scandalous lack of understanding on the importance of early years intervention in improving a child's life chances. They need to decide if they want good or if they want cheap early years provision - they can't have good, cheap early years provision."

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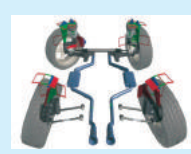
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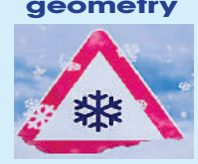
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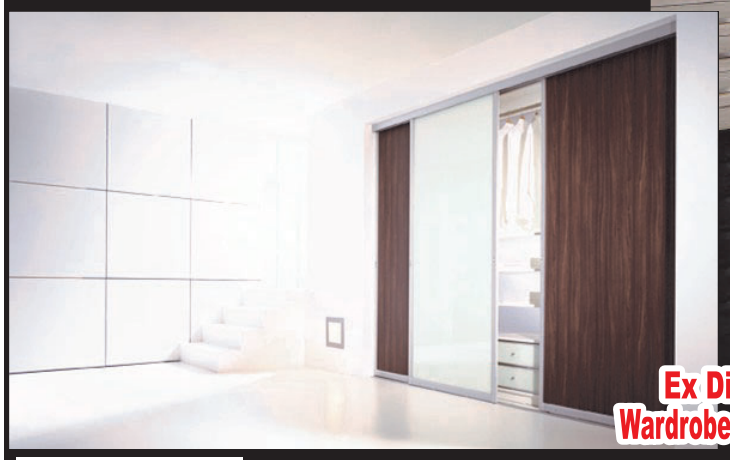

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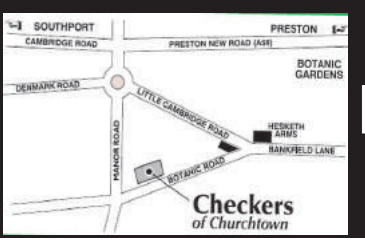

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Planning committee to discuss proposed 45-home Ashurst site development

WEST Lancs councillors are to discuss plans to build 45 two, three and four-bedroom homes at Ashurst.

The application has been submitted by Gleeson Homes Ltd and will come before the council's planning committee on Thursday (February 9).

Access to the proposed development would be off Ashurst Road.

And athough the development would result in the loss of land designated as open space in the West Lancashire Local Plan, the applicant has donated £45,000 to help improve open space in the area.

The council has said the scheme offers discounted market housing on all the proposed units, and offers low-cost home ownership on various house types.

In a report for the meeting the director of development and regeneration at West Lancs Council, John Harrison, was "satisfied that design, layout and scale complies with relevant local plan policies and the council's Design Guide and would not adversely affect the character and appearance of the local area."

The NHS Trust has written to the council raising concerns that the development may have a knock-on effect for car parking at the health centre. However, the council believes adequate off-street car parking will be provided for each plot.

The borough council has received letters from residents with concerns about the potential increase in traffic, but the highways authority has said the development, "will not have a severe impact on highway capacity."

The scheme will bring in a New Homes Bonus of about £314,148 during a six-year period.

Mr Harrison commented: "Subject to conditions, I am satisfied that the proposed development is compliant with the Local Plan in respect of drainage, highways and ecology.

"In principle I consider this scheme should be supported as it will deliver housing in a sustainable location and will offer wider regeneration benefits to the area."

Officers are recommending that the proposal be delegated to the director of development and regeneration in consultation with the chairman or vice-chairman of the planning committee.

Skem charity project helps to improve quality of education in Nepal schools

Report by **Henry James**

SKELMERSDALE-based charity Resolve International has been invited to make its Quality Primary Education programme available to all schools in Nepal.

The charity was set up to address the plight of children in the South Asian republic living in poverty.

Keith Laycock, chairman of the charity was recently guest of honour at the official opening ceremony of new libraries at five schools in Pala, Western Nepal.

Resolve International has introduced their education programme to these schools as part of a pilot project.

Many officials had gathered a few hundred yards down from Dhimi Karina School where the event was about to take place. Keith was preceded by musicians playing drums, cymbals and Tibetan-style long trumpets and was followed by the district education officer, headteachers, officials and local politicians.

The event lasted several hours with speeches by all the official guests.

There was lots of dancing, while students had written songs about how great it was to have a library in their school and the difference it was making in their lives.

Keith travelled with an independent Nepalese consultant to all five schools to assess the project's progress.

Primary education in government schools in the country generally produces poor results, so Resolve International with local organisation Nepal Gaja Development Foundation tested reading and comprehension at the start of the project and found that students in grades one and two had limited reading or comprehension skills.

Remedial teaching was given for one month to improve reading skills and short courses with ongoing support were provided for teachers at the five schools in library management, materials development and child-friendly teaching.

Keith added: "The results have been surprisingly good so far."

The one-year pilot project is funded by a grant of £32,800 from the British and Foreign School Society.

Most rural schools in Nepal do not have libraries or access to additional reading materials. And those which do have books usually lock them away in cupboards, because they are too precious to allow children to spoil them. So educating the teachers about how to integrate the use of story books into the daily activities of the school was essential.

Keith said: "We interviewed teachers, students and parents at each of the schools in this pilot project and were amazed at the difference the project has made to the life of the schools."

Students' reading and comprehension has improved, they behave better in class and teachers enjoy using the teaching techniques they have learned.

Classes are much more interactive than they used to be and lots of pictures and students work are on display in the classrooms. Students are now allowed to take books home.

One parent told Keith that she had not completed secondary school so she now borrows books from the school library and enjoys reading them at home.

Left: Children in Nepal enjoy their new library

Keith Laycock at the opening of a new school in Nepal

The project has another two months to run and further testing will reveal the true success of this pilot project.

Keith commented: "The government of Nepal has written a new curriculum focusing on early grade reading, but training for teachers will not be available in all schools straight away, so we are already examining the potential of expanding the scope of this Quality Education project in more schools in Nepal, but of course we will need lots of support."

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Tots 'waddle' their way to help African maternity unit

By Danielle Thompson

TODDLERS from an Ormskirk Nursery have raised more than £600 for a maternity unit in West Africa.

The Little Lambs under-fives play group meets each week at St John's the Baptist Church's hall on Liverpool Road North, under the guidance of Helen Jones and a group of volunteers.

Volunteers, parents and child-minders joined the youngsters on their sponsored Toddle Waddle event around the school yard with the tots singing songs at the same time.

They raised £605 for the Burkina Faso Maternity Unit, a project by the Christian charity International Needs, who have raised £100,000 so far to create a new seven-bed maternity suite at their health centre in Burkina Faso, where home births are one of the leading causes of child mortality and women dying from post-natal complications.

The building is almost finished and is being fitted out with fixtures and fittings, as well as solar panels installed to make the unit self-sufficient.

It is expected to officially open later this month.

Youngsters from Little Lambs on their sponsored walk

Little Lambs' group leader, Helen Jones, said: "One toddler had raised sponsorship of more than £160 and many brothers and sisters of the youngsters, had donated some of their pocket money.

"It was particularly encouraging to see adults and children demonstrating such generous support and compassion for African communities struggling with life on the margins of the Sahara desert.

"The money raised will be used in support of the completion of a new maternity unit built under International Needs, a Christian organisation specialising in humanitarian support to nations in the developing world."

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Poem written by Sharon a family member

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New veterans group seeks backing from local businesses

Report by **Henry James**

Alan Lewis (left) and fellow veterans Harry McKenzie, Tom Creevy and Gary Simpson.

OFFICIALS of the newly-formed Skelmersdale Veterans Association are appealing for support and sponsorship from local busineses in the West Lancashire area.

The association is made up of current and previous members of the country's armed forces, as well as members of the emergency services who have all seen active service across the world.

Chairman, Alan Lewis MBE a former Royal Green Jacket, would like to hear from local firms who would like to give something back to the community by sponsoring them.

He has already secured a pledge of support from Hotter Shoes.

Alan Lewis said: "We are looking for help from businesses and any employees who may want to help.

"The association is open to both male and female members of all ranks. We meet on the second Sunday of every month at the Hare and Hounds public house in Ormskirk Road, Skelmersdale at 2pm and the next meeting will take place on February 12."

Alan and fellow committee members have a proven track record of organising community events and the new association will be holding a number of high-profile days, including a concert on the weekend of the anniversary of the Battle of The Somme on Friday, June 30.

Mr Lewis added: "The concert will be for the whole community with youths and adults alike celebrating as one."

There will also be a dinner at the Evermoor Hub for veterans and their families and friends on July 1 and the association will be organising an annual Armed Forces Day on July 22/23 for the local community, along with a Remembrance Parade.

The veterans also plan to engage with young people from local schools, colleges and cadet forces and a visit to The National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire is planned. Any sponsors will be mentioned in an Armed Forces Day programme.

For more information about the association email Alan Lewis at alan.say@hotmail.co.uk or call 07939 660 048.

Colourful Caribbean Night raises funds for hospital neonatal unit

COLOURFUL clothing was in abundance at the E Rooms in Skelmersdale when the venue staged a Caribbean-themed fundraiser in aid of the neonatal unit at Ormskirk Hospital.

Among the guests was Deputy Mayor of West Lancashire, Councillor Neil Furey who performed the official opening before joining in the fun.

He is pictured above with organisers, fellow councillors and other guests.

Skelmersdale is setting for new play by Litherland-born writer

SKELMERSDALE is the setting of a new play by Litherland-born writer, Michael McLean currently being staged in London.

Years of Sunlight premiered at Theatre 503 in Battersea on Wednesday, January 25 and is scheduled to run until Saturday, February 18.

Starting in 2009, the action gradually backtracks over the preceding 27 years to explore a disintegrating friendship. The action begins with Paul, now living in Dublin, returning to Skelmersdale to gaze wistfully with his mother, Hazel, on the remains of her burnt-out house.

Eventually it is revealed that the fire may have been the fault of Paul's old chum, Emlyn, a drug addict to whom Hazel acted as a surrogate mum.

The play also looks at the creation of Skelmersdale New Town and how thousands of Liverpudlians were moved from the city, because of over crowding.

Michael McLean is a former member of Liverpool Everyman Young Writers Group. While with the group he went to residential workshops with the London Royal Court Theatre.

He was also involved with the Paines Plough/Channel 4 Future Perfect Scheme, and was a member of the Royal Court Invitation Group.

Theatre503 is a venue specialising in giving more opportunities to new writers than other theatres in England.

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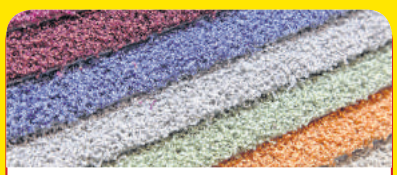

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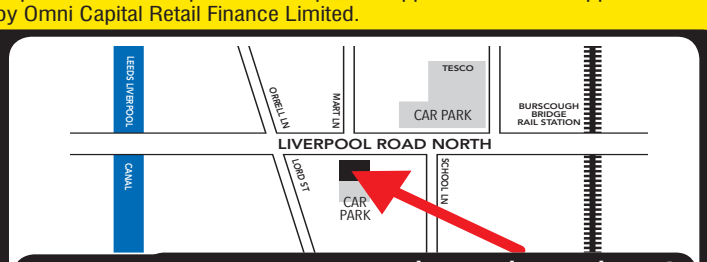

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Dedicated anglers wanted as volunteer bailiffs to join fight against illegal fishing

DEDICATED local anglers are being sought to help the fight against illegal fishing and fish theft in Lancashire.

The Angling Trust and Environment Agency are appealing for more recruits to join their Voluntary Bailiff Service (VBS).

The volunteers act as the 'eyes and ears' on river banks canal banks and lakes, reporting suspicious incidents and providing crucial information to the Environment Agency and the police.

VBS began as a pilot project in the South East in 2012 following a formal partnership between the Environment Agency and the Angling Trust. It was rolled out across the country in spring 2015 and, following inductions last autumn the Environment Agency's Cumbria and Lancashire area has seven volunteers with more planned to join later in the year.

Bailiffs are unpaid and rigorously vetted before they are selected. Successful candidates receive an intensive training course on what is expected of them from enforcement professionals, including the Angling Trust, the Environment Agency and the head of the UK National Wildlife Crime Unit.

Volunteers are trained on fisheries enforcement law, signs of illegal fishing and how to record information in a way that could be used as evidence. First-hand learning includes attending joint patrols with the police and Environment Agency.

And it's not just rod licence offenders that are being reported. On some patrols people have been cautioned by the police for going equipped for poaching, motoring offences and possessing drugs and weapons.

Dilip Sarkar, the Angling Trust's national enforcement manager, said: "All of our volunteers are valued and we now have the sound foundation to move forward, increase engagement and provide more practical training. Although we still have far to go, this activity is already making a difference."

More volunteers needed to join the Voluntary Bailiff Service (VBS)

Graeme Storey, national fisheries manager at the Environment Agency, added: "All money raised through rod licence sales is used to protect and improve fish stocks benefiting anglers.

"The Voluntary Bailiff Service is our latest move to tackle illegal fishing and to protect that revenue. The vast majority of anglers who fish legally deserve to see those who flout the law brought to account but to that criminal minority our message is clear: we won't hesitate to take action."

Induction and training days for the VBS are being run this spring and anyone interested in joining should email karen.sarkar@anglingtrust.net.

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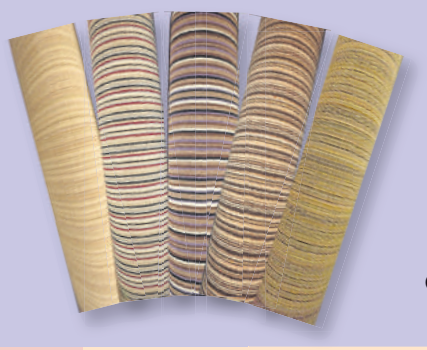

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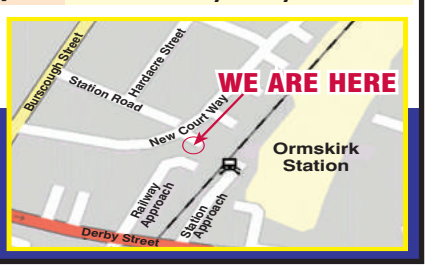

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2017 guide to county's tourist attractions published

THIS year's annial guide to all that Lancashire has to offer to visitors has been published.

Marketing Lancashire - the 'destination management organisation' for the county - has announced the release of the official Lancashire Visitor Magazine 2017.

The 146-page publication is available at key attractions, gateways and information centres across the country and online at visitlancashire.com, the county's official tourism website.

It features articles highlighting Lancashire's award-winning visitor attractions, the county's diverse culture and heritage, major events and landmark anniversaries and countryside and city breaks, as well as food and drink.

Ruth Connor, chief executive of Marketing Lancashire, said: "The 2017 visitor magazine celebrates the great variety and choice available for short breaks, days out and unique experiences in the Red Rose County.

"More than 64 million people visit Lancashire each year and our aim is to grow that to 70million by 2020.

"The new–style magazine, website and seasonal campaigns play a lead role in growing interest in short breaks and holidays in Lancashire throughout the year. "Our main aim is to attract more visitors, who stay longer, to ensure the continuing success and growth of Lancashire's £3.8 billion visitor economy."

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Top of range bespoke 12,200 pocket sprung bed.

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OLD BED RECYCLING SERVICE

Pupils from Tarleton Holy Trinity CE Primary School enjoying the first edition of the THT Times

Young news hounds' first edition hits the classroom

Report by **Danielle Thompson**

ENTERPRISING youngsters at a West Lancashire school are making the headlines - literally! - after setting up their own newspaper.

The Year 5 and 6 pupils at Tarleton Holy Trinity Church of England Primary, launched the THT Times under the guidance of the school's subject leader for English, Rebecca Birkby, and the first edition has already 'hit' the classroom.

The young news hounds, all aged between nine and 11, came up with their own story ideas and are interviewing a variety of people for future editions of the paper.

Developing

Initially they invited visitors from publishers to discuss how to create the newspaper, from the writing of the articles to rolling out the finished product.

The first edition included a story about how Year 6 teacher Phillip Marshall and wife Joanna celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary during a recent trip to Uganda.

Headteacher, Stephen Smith, said: "The children are developing their own roles within the newspaper club where they can write articles, carry out interviews, create quizzes and take photographs - giving them a real reason to write!

"We aim is to publish a newspaper each half-term which the children will sell at lunchtimes for 10p a copy.

"We think it makes a wonderful read!"

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Councils' backing helps Nick cook up recipe for success

Report by **Danielle Thompson**

A BUSINESSMAN from Ormskirk has launched one of the UK's first companies selling specialised clay ovens - thanks to a start-up loan from the county and borough councils.

Nick Jones came up with the idea for Tandoor-i - a home business selling integrated tandoor ovens - after spotting a gap in the market when he was unable to find one for his own home that wasn"t a huge commercially-sized version.

A tandoor oven is traditionally a cylindrical clay or metal oven used in cooking and baking.

Nick's ovens are clay ones which are fitted into an island unit in the kitchen with access from above via a metal lid, taking up a unit's worth of space.

Nick Jones with one of his integrated tandoor ovens

And he has advanced designs for a second model that can be used from the front in a regular kitchen base unit.

The 46-year-old father-of-two, said: "I wanted a tandoor oven for my new kitchen a few years ago and I looked for an integrated one but only found commercial ovens - so I built my own.

"One thing led to another with lots of friends and family saying they'd buy one too so I built a prototype, sent it off to the certification authorities and had it approved for use in the UK and Ireland in November.

"I believe that we are the selling world's first fully-integrated domestic tandoor oven and we are proud to have established the business in Ormskirk.

"We have the tandoor clay pots shipped from Delhi, India and the rest of the manufacturing is done here in the UK, with the final assembly and testing carried out at Twinbridge Fabrications in Burscough.

"I got to this point with some initial seed investment but was able to launch thanks to a government start-up loan from Go Fund Me which was supported by West Lancs Borough Council and Lancashire County Council.

"Our first order is being shipped to Bristol this week, which is very exciting!"

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MORE THAN YOU THINK

Champion LETTERS to the Editor

Clare House, 166 Lord Street, Southport PR9 0QA
tel 01704 392 400 email editor@champnews.com

Why are our Labour politicians so opposed to affordable homes being built in borough?

I BELIEVE that Redrow Homes has appealed the decision to refuse them planning permission on Parrs Lane, Aughton.

This is absolutely brilliant news and I wish them and Wainhomes all the luck and success in the world.

The need for affordable housing in Aughton has never been greater and I cannot for the life of me figure out why this Labour council and our Labour MP are so opposed to affordable homes that would mean accomodating all residents in our little corner of the world.

Especially considering their never-ending granting of HMOs on every affordable home that is snapped up by landlords in Ormskirk.

Perhaps one councillor or even our MP might break the habit of a lifetime and actually take the time to respond to readers' questions on this subject.

A previous letter suggested that our council has spent £150,000 (so far) fighting to stop affordable homes in Aughon at the expense of vital services, yet no one seems to be held to account over this.

Might I suggest our MP stops her crusade against the Bridgewater consortium - which isn't even in Lancashire so is really none of her business - and concentrate on the serious misuse of taxpayer monies in her own constituency.

Aughton resident, details supplied

Burscough is crying out for a bypass to ease congestion on A59

BURSCOUGH was originally a small village built around a mill.

It has grown steadily since and is now an urban sprawl with hundreds of new houses having been built and a large industrial estate established with hundreds more houses and industrial buildings planned for the Yew Tree Farm site.

The problem for Burscough is that there is only one road - the A59 - going through the village.

The amount of traffic now using this road is enormous and as soon as any of the utility companies dig a hole the road comes to a grinding halt with very long tailbacks.

It is so bad that the council have admitted that Liverpool Road from the Bull and Dog to the turn-off to Parbold is the mostpot-holed road in the county but they can't resurface it because the utility companies keep digging it up.

There has got to be room for a bypass along the old airfield site to bypass Burscough and Rufford which would be very beneficial to both residents and haulage drivers.

Les Jones, by email

Still no evidence to support traffic claims

RE: Councillor Westley's response (Champion, February) to my earlier letter when I asked him to give us the evidence for his claims in his leaflet that traffic through the centre of Ormskirk is 'severely congested' and 'strangled' .

1. He said that he was quoting the West Lancs Transport and Highways Master Plan. This document does not include these phrases.

2. He has not produced any evidence to support his claims. He simply repeats his own opinions. My opinions are just as good as his.

3. He seems to suggest that my observations of the traffic are disproved because I'm a cyclist and a member of the Green Party. So what? He wants to make this into a party political issue.

4. He says that I'm opposed to investment in our roads. That is untrue. I'm glad that Derby Street has at last been resurfaced. Of course I've argued for years that there is no need for an Ormskirk bypass.

His red herrings fail to hide the fact that he has not answered my request for him to give us the evidence. I would simply invite your readers to make their own judgements.

I would agree with him that the traffic lights through the town need to be synchronised.

Maurice George, by email

PICTURE of the week

Some of the 2,500 entrants who took part in the seventh 10K Mad Dog race last Sunday reach the half-way point along Southport Promenade. Picture by Martyn Snape.

Drop us a line

IF you've got a view on a topic of local or national interest which you would like to share with the readers of the Champion, why not drop us a line?

Letters to the editor should be concise, preferably no more than 350 words, and should include the sender's name, address and contact details, although not necessarily for publication.

The editor reserves the right to edit all items submitted for favour of publication.

Correspondents preferring not to have their name and/or their address published may provide a suitable nom de plume.

Letters can be posted or emailed to the respective addresses listed at the top of this page.

■ PLEASE note: All views and opinions expressed in letters to the editor are solely those of the authors and are NOT necessarily endorsed or advocated in any way by Champion Newspapers.

Honest shopper earns ringing endorsement

I WOULD like through the columns of the Champion, to pass on my thanks to the very kind gentleman who found my mobile phone in the car park at Aldi in Kew (January 20).

This gent first rang a couple of stored contacts and managed to speak to my daughter. He then handed the phone in at Aldi for safekeeping (thanks, Aldi!).

My daughter rang my husband's phone to tell me where it was - all before I even noticed it was missing!

Thanks again anonymous shopper, it was much appreciated and lovely to know that we do share the country with thoughtful, honest people.

G. Taylor,
Holmeswood

Shamed by visitors having to wade through other people's filth

WHEN will West Lancs Council do something about bins being left outside and smokers throwing their fag ends over their garden walls and fences? I believe it is a local disgrace.

The bin issue is disgusting, it's unhealthy and an eyesore and attracts rats.

In most cases I have seen there is ample garden or yard space for people to put their bins out of sight.

As for the cigarette ends, what can I say? It's just pure arrogance, ignorance or downright laziness. How much does an ashtray cost?

The council should make it illegal to keep bins outside and fine those who won't comply.

I understand some people won't have the luxury of a garden or yard and will have no options for their bins, but in my experience I have seen the downward spiral of many council housing estates embedded with filth and nothing is being done.

I am ashamed to bring visitors to my door having to wade through other people's filth.

Disgruntled, Skelmersdale

Council 'gardener' thought primulas were cabbages!

JUST read an article in the Champion (February 1) about a West Lancs councillor urging residents to check tree contractors are suitably qualified.

I would advise this councillor, before he criticises, to check the qualifications of their so-called ground maintainance department.

Last year I had a reason to come into contact with one of their 'gardeners' who looked at my garden and asked me to identify a shrub. He thought that the primulas I had growing were cabbages!

It was then I thought to myself 'beam me up Scotty'.

Chris Grogan, Tanhouse, Skelmersdale

Derby Street repairs missing the point

SO Lancashire County Council have finally resurfaced Derby Street, we now have a nice smooth road to drive on - APART from the area that was most in need of doing, the railway bridge?

That has just been patched up yet again!

What is the actual point of leaving a 30-metre stretch with bumps and uneven surfaces, when the rest of it has been done?

Yours despairingly...

Ormskirk taxi driver, by email

New action group outlines plans to make borough more dementia-friendly

THE first meeting of 2017 of a group created with the aim of making West Lancashire more dementia-friendly has identified a number of high-priority projects to work on in the next 12 months.

The West Lancashire Dementia Action Alliance, which was launched in December, has pinpointed the following areas for priority in the year ahead:

- Supporting volunteers to provide dementia-friendly activities and cafés.
- Making local transport (buses and taxis) more dementia-friendly.
- Developing a go-to directory of local services and support.
- Supporting more active healthy lifestyles engaging with Active West Lancs.

The Dementia Action Alliance is a national initiative with more than 300 local groups working to support those living with dementia to live well and independently in the community for longer.

National and local organisations, groups and individuals supporting the West Lancs initiative include Alzheimer's Society, Age UK, NCompass, Care & Repair, CVS, West Lancs Council and Lancashire County Council, Ormskirk Hospital, Home Instead Senior Care, Ormskirk Community Partnership, Cottage Lane Mission, Edge Hill University and Students' Union, the Police and Fire Service, U3A and West Lancashire Pensioners Forum, local Dementia Friends Champion Joe Sherville and the Champion.

There are around 1,500 people in West Lancashire affected by dementia and at the heart of creating more dementia-friendly communities is the roll-out of the Alzheimer's Society's Dementia Friends initiative, which aims to break down the stigma around dementia and help the public with a basic understanding of the condition.

Gareth Dowling, interim chair of the alliance, said: "I am delighted West Lancashire has joined a national movement to become a dementia-friendly community.

"Through the Dementia Friends initiative we are opening minds to what dementia actually is and how we can live well with it, but only with a diagnosis, the right support and medication and the local community taking small actions that can make a lasting difference.

"What we must do now is use this momentum to drive forward our vision and ensure we take actions to improve the lives of those living with dementia and their carers in our community and I'd like to thank all our supporters for their input."

Chance to track village's rail heritage

RAIL enthusiasts are being invited to take a nostalgic journey down memory lane at the next meeting of the Burscough Heritage Group.

The show-and-tell talk event, entitled *The History and Heritage of Burscough's Railways*, will be held at the Blue Mallard on Burscough Wharf on Monday, February 13 from 7.30pm.

Colin Wareing, from the group, said: "In 1849 the Liverpool to Preston railway started running through Burscough, followed six years later by the Wigan to Southport line. Come and share your memories of the tracks and trains, the staff, the trips you've taken, the Flying Scotsman, the Merrymaker trips of the 1970s and 1980s, your daily commute, photos, artefacts, timetables, bits of stations, posters, model and anything else!

"Mike Dawson will be there with his scanner to copy pictures, or if you can bring a disc or memory stick or email them to burscoughvch@yahoo.co.uk so we have a few images to start the presentation off.

"It would be great to put together a chronological list of the station masters that have been in charge of the three stations in the parish."

The Flying Scotsman passing through Burscough Bridge

Entrance fee is a £2 donation to the group, for more information call Colin on 07931356204.

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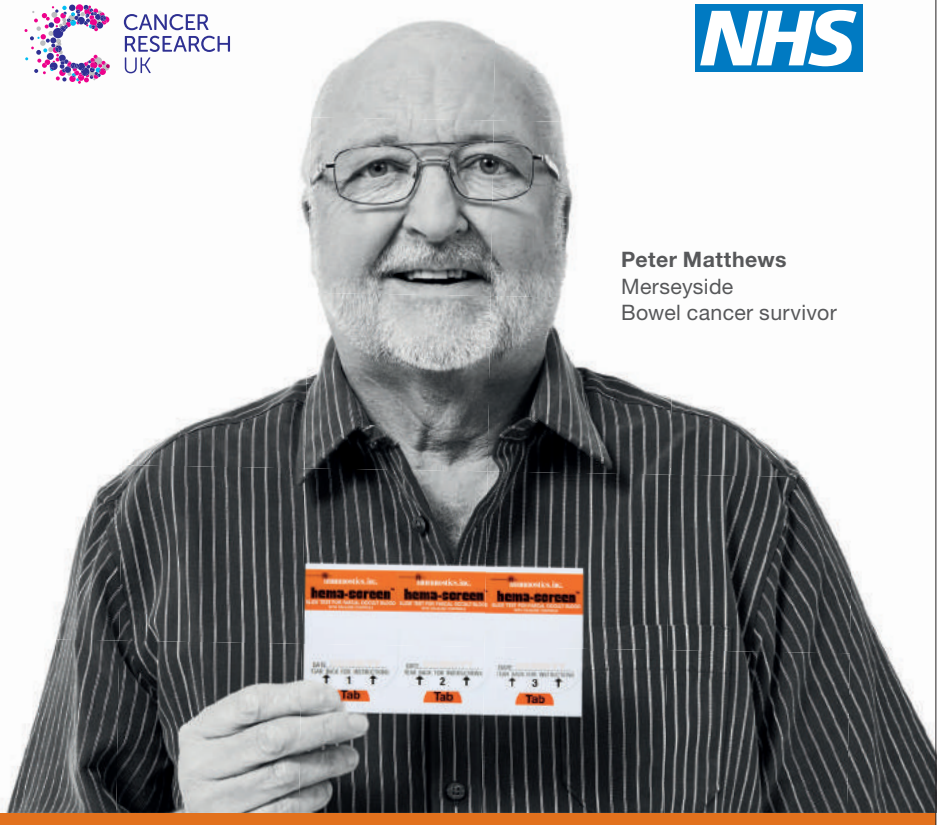

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University says new partnership will help musical theatre students turn their studies into careers

Report by **Henry James**

MUSICAL theatre students at Edge Hill are set to benefit from a new partnership set up by the university with a company dedicated to new British musicals.

Already aiming to shape the future of musical theatre through its new degree programme, the Ormskirk university has now added a key partnership with Perfect Pitch, supported by Arts Council England.

And as a result of the partnership, students developed and performed *Club Mexicano* a new musical written by John-Victor and comedian and award-winning songwriter Tamar Broadbent.

A workshop production - meaning the musical is staged in a simpler and less polished style - *Club Mexicano* tells the story of Mel's hen night in an 18-30s holiday resort in Mexico.

Performed for the first time at Edge Hill earlier this month, it is hoped the musical might one day become a full professional production.

Perfect Pitch producer, Wendy Barnes, said: "We commend Edge Hill for looking for unique learning experiences for their students. Workshopping new and innovative material from emerging British writers is a fantastic opportunity for the students to learn about the writing process and create new roles that have never been performed before.

'Amazing experience'

"It is an equally rewarding experience for our writers and creatives to be developing their musicals with a team of talented young performers amid the wonderful facilities Edge Hill can offer. We look forward to finding new projects to continue our partnership in the future."

Second-year musical theatre student, Maggie Clarke, commented: "Having the opportunity to work with industry professionals and shape a new musical is brilliant. It's been an amazing experience and counts as a professional performance that we can include in our CV."

The partnership is an example of the university's ambition to shape and promote musical theatre, particularly embracing opportunities in new productions that have not originated in the West End.

A scene from Club Mexicano

This growing sector allows for more timely and topical musical theatre covering issues such as politics and race relations to appeal to new audiences.

Edge Hill musical theatre lecturer, Clare Chandler, said: "Musical theatre is a growing, diverse area and I'm delighted that as well as our membership of the Musical Theatre Network we now have a working partnership with Perfect Pitch.

"This means our students have access to the country's best writers, composers, producers and directors so they gain real experience of the many roles and skills needed in musical theatre.

"The musical theatre degree at Edge Hill is sector-leading as we're one of the few universities combining the teaching of a broad practical skill set with specific study modules such as the analysis of words and music, politics and the history and development of musical theatre.

"It's a competitive industry so this, along with rare opportunities such as *Club Mexicano*, give our students the edge and ultimately make them more employable in the industry as a whole."

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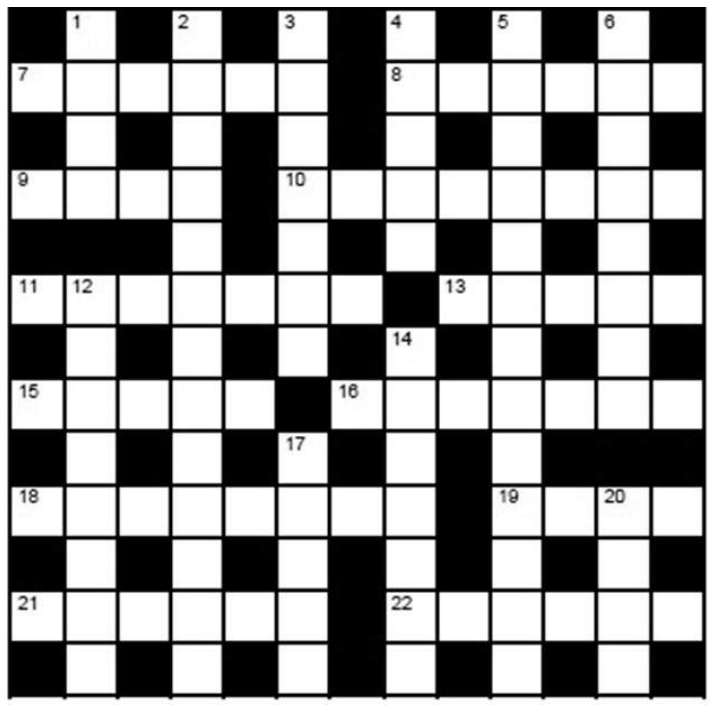

Last week's solutions:

Across: 7 Understanding. 8 Aptitude. 9 Idol. 10 Equerry. 12 Lynch. 14 Comma. 16 Towards. 19 Gird. 20 Deep-laid. 22 Animal kingdom.

Down: 1 Snap. 2 Revive. 3 Estuary. 4 Sales. 5 Oddity. 6 Enforced. 11 Quotient. 13 Lobelia. 15 Madame. 17 Allege. 18 Adult. 21 Iron.

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ACROSS

7. Having a strong dislike of or opposition to something (6)
8. In a confident or forthright manner (6)
9. A grating (4)
10. Supporter of a cause (8)
11. Unenclosed space outdoors (4, 3)
13. Fish-eating wading bid with S-shaped neck (5)
15. Keen, enthusiastic (5)
16. It's celebrated annually on December 31st (3, 4)
18. Highly skilled musician (8)
19. Scottish lake, e.g. Ness or Lomond (4)
21. Serious quarrel (4-2)
22. Not including (6)

DOWN

1. Finished (4)
2. Specially designed industrial and commercial area (7, 6)
3. Royal insignia (7)
4. On top of (5)
5. Bingo caller's expression for the number 66 (8-5)
6. Excessive amount of something (8)
12. Silvery-white precious metal (8)
14. Very loyal (7)
17. Subdivision or branch of an army (5)
20. Short, sleeveless cloak (4)

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New director at care trust

LANCASHIRE Care NHS Foundation Trust has appointed Julia Possener as a non-executive director.

Julia has previously undertaken a similar role for Calderstones Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (now Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust) and has wealth of experience at board level in the health service.

She also has a professional background as a corporate finance lawyer in a number of senior legal, governance, compliance and business roles in both private and financial services.

Lancashire Care chief executive, Heather Tierney-Moore, said: "We're absolutely delighted to welcome Julia to the board and look forward to the skills and expertise that she will bring to the trust. Julia joins us having had experience at another NHS organisation and we hope this will help with the development and improvement of the services we provide for people within Lancashire."

Julia Possener commented: "I look forward to the challenges ahead during this pressured time within the NHS and hope to build on the skills and knowledge I have gained over the years and to make a valuable contribution to the trust and its future direction."

Julia been appointed for a term of three years with effect from February 1.

Julia Possener new non-excutive director at Lancashire Care Trust

University celebrates Chinese New Year

STAFF and students at Edge Hill University havie been celebrating the Chinese New Year.

A number of events were staged at the Ormskirk campus by the university's Confucius Institute to mark the start of the Year of the Rooster, including a traditional Chinese street market and a performance in the evening.

Right: Chinese New Year celebration at Edge Hill University's Confuscious Institute

ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

What is State Pension top up and is it right for you?

With applications for the Government's State Pension top up scheme closing on 5 April 2017, it's worth considering if it could be right for you.

It is a government scheme that allows you to boost your retirement income by between £1 and £25 a week in exchange for a lump sum payment.

To take advantage of this scheme you will need to be entitled to a UK State Pension and have reached State Pension age before 6 April 2016 – that's men born before 6 April 1951, and women born before 6 April 1953.

The boosted payment is:

- Guaranteed for life
- Inheritable in most cases by a spouse or civil partner
- Protected against inflation

WHAT IT COSTS

The amount you would need to contribute will depend on the boosted amount you want and how old you are, as the cost reduces with age. An online calculator can help you calculate what your contribution would be.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

The scheme isn't right for everyone, and there are alternative ways to boost retirement income. State Pension top up is taxable as income, and we recommend seeking independent advice before taking-up the scheme.

HOW TO APPLY

Just apply online at gov.uk/statepensiontopup and we'll post you everything you need.

Remember that the deadline for online applications is midnight 5 April 2017

Want to find out more about your State Pension?
Whether you're eligible for State Pension top up or not, you can find out more about the State Pension – what it is, what you'll get and when you'll get it – at gov.uk/yourstatepension.

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Hero award for young baby unit fundraiser

A YOUNG boy whose family has raised more than £27,000 for Ormskirk Hospital's neonatal unit which helped him to survive when he was born 10 weeks early has been recognised for his efforts.

Theo Graham, from Formby, who helped his parents to raise money for the unit, received a Young Hero Award at a ceremony sponsored by the Scottish Power Foundation. The awards recognise people, organisations, schools and sports teams who make a difference to the local community.

The four-year-old's parents Emma and Lee, started fundraising for the Ormskirk baby unit after he was born there weighing just 2lb 8oz in October 2012.

The couple have held a number of fundraisers in the last three years towards the cost of a new £40,000 transport incubator that the hospital received last year.

Theo, who performed a song and dance routine at their most recent fundraiser at St Jerome's Parish Centre in Formby, got up on stage to collect his award on his own despite being poorly with croup, tonsillitis and an ear infection.

Proud mum, Emma, told the Champion: "We are so pleased that Theo won the award. He is just an incredible little boy, so thoughtful and has always helped out with fundraising despite how young he is!"

Theo Graham with his Young Hero Award

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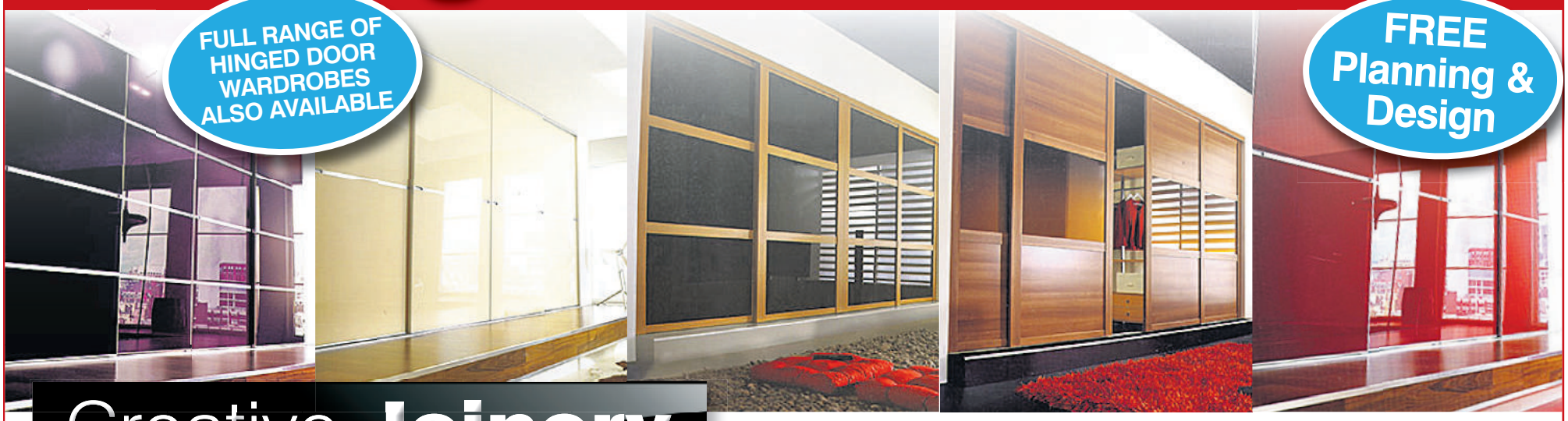

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Ormskirk Parkrun notches 150th milestone

Family-friendly popular Saturday morning event now attracts about 250 runners each week

THE Ormskirk Parkrun has staged its 150th run at its Edge Hill University course.

The free weekly event, which began in 2014, takes place every Saturday at 9am throughout the year (bar the occasional cancellation for ice) and has grown steadily in popularity.

Average numbers now are around 250 runners per week - up from around 100 in the first year and in spite of new parkruns starting up in various surrounding towns.

Event director Robbie Kiger said of the 150th milestone: "It's great to see how parkrun has developed, and especially the way it has attracted not just established runners but a lot of people who are new to exercise or who have not exercised for many years.

"We're also attracting a lot of younger runners, in conjunction with the new junior event at Skelmersdale."

"Our main message is: it doesn't matter if you're fast or slow - we welcome walkers - what matters is that you're out with us giving it a go.

Runners enjoying the 150th Ormskirk Parkrun. Photo by Graham Bell.

"You'll never be last, because we always have tailrunners. So just register at www.parkrun.org.uk, print a barcode so you get your run recorded and come on down for 9am on a Saturday."

Commenting on her experience of parkrun, regular runner Angela Eadie from Skelmersdale said: "I'm asthmatic but I wanted to try and get fitter. I started parkrun in May 2016 and have now done 18 runs.

"Everyone at Ormskirk parkrun is welcoming and really encouraging to all runners.

"Parkrun has become a real family affair for us. My son Adam and daughter Alice have both done 16 runs now, and my husband Colin also started in August, and has now done nine runs."

Just the ticket!

THE winners of the Champion's Sunny Afternoon competition for a pair of tickets to see the show at the Liverpool Empire were as follows: Tony Keggin of Waterloo; Brenda McAdam of Great Crosby; Raymond Simpson from Ormskirk; Carolyn Jassi from Rufford; and Jennifer White from Skelmersdale.

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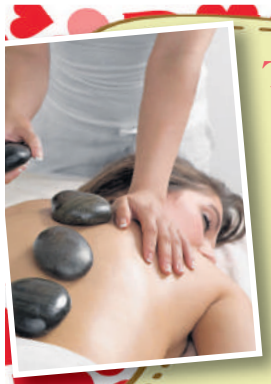

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We don't need silly PC Brigade instructions to tell us how to respect people

WE have plenty of problems at the moment - Brexit, climate change and Donald Trump - to name just three.

Yet despair not, Political Correctness is alive and well at the British Medical Association.

The BMA have told doctors no longer to call pregnant women 'expectant mothers' because, apparently, this age-old phrase might offend transgender people!

They should call them 'pregnant people.'

This 'guidance' also thinks we should treat each other 'withdignity and as integrated members of an integrated community.'

Who could argue with that? We should respect and try to rub along together amiably.

I don't remember the BMA ever asking me, but apparently I could be offended at being told I am elderly - which I suppose I am, just about - and that I should be referred to as an 'older person.'

Well of course I am an older person. But older than what? You're an older person now than when you started reading this! We are all older than we were this time last year.

Silliness

But at least I can just about see what silliness they are trying to achieve in this - though what business it is of theirs I really don't know. However, it goes on to say that someone who is "biologically male or female" should henceforth be termed "assigned male or female."

Yes. Well. No.

I cannot see who wants ever to be called 'assigned' anything. And for that matter, perhaps a transgender person could be referred to as 'biologically male or female'?

I've never got my head round this business of not assigning the sex of a person to a job title.

If, for instance, barman was OK, what was wrong with barmaid? It's surely not insulting, and it does give a far better mental picture of the person you are referring to than the rather awful 'bar person', although some modern titles are indeed fine, like 'firefighter' for instance.

And this stupid idea of referring to anyone who performs on stage or film as an actor, irrespective of sex defeats me. Was an actress ever thought of as being subordinate to an actor?

I have news for these irritating PC persons. Men and women are different!

Actually I have probably just perpetrated a PC no-no.

I should probably said 'persons of different genders are different' - except of course the PC Brigade would seek to convince others that in fact they are not.

And as to this business of never, ever, causing offence - why?

I might well be offended if I was to be referred to as 'an old man'.

At least for the present, I don't think I have earned that title. But if I was I'd get over it.

I have been called misogynist, a racist, a 'Little Englander' - none of which I am.

I don't like it - and occasionally I am offended. But people are entitled to express their opinion and hey ho, the world spins on and so does life.

And where I do agree with the BMA is that we should all respect and attempt to get along with each other - but not by being given silly instructions as to how to achieve this desirable end.

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'Curious Garden' theme set to add touch of mystery to Flower Show

Report by **Ollie Cowan**

THIS year's Southport Flower Show will be a celebration of all things mysterious.

Combining what organisers say will be unique entertainment with live cooking demonstrations and innovative planting displays, bosses at the show have announced their 88th theme as... 'The Curious Garden.'

Show bosses say the event will be 'inspired by a sense of secrecy, wonder and curiosity.' The 2017 theme will represent the garden as something to be 'discovered, explored and bewildered by.'

Talking about the show, Ray Roukin, general manager of Southport Flower Show said: "2017 marks a big year for the Southport Flower Show.

"The Curious Garden theme has been chosen as it allows us to build on some great existing aspects of the show, which we know our customers love, and reinvent them slightly. We're also bringing in completely new elements to ensure the event is fresh and appeals to both our current audience and new imaginations.

"It's an incredibly exciting time, as gardeners and exhibitors from the 2016 event now begin planning for their next appearance at the show. We're confident the show, in this new format, will be our best to date."

The show's new theme is supported by an updated brand identify, including a modernised logo and marketing direction; which will see a focus on the family audience.

Celebrities and entertainment for the 2017 show have yet to be announced as the organisers continue to play on the curious theme.

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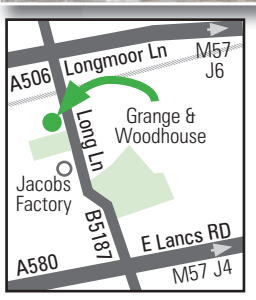

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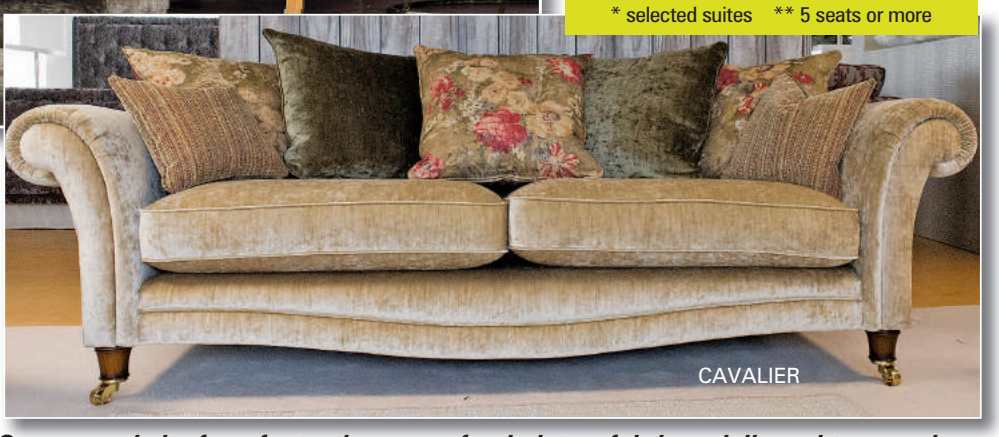

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Drama dragons enthrall shoppers with New Year show

Students from Ormskirk School performing at the Chinese New Year celebrations in Liverpool

STUDENTS from a secondary school in Ormskirk led the way at Chinese New Year celebrations - by dancing a 120ft dragon through China Town and the streets of Liverpool!

Staff, students and volunteers from Ormskirk School on Wigan Road, who were trained by the Hung Gar Friendship Association in the run-up to the event, took their bright red and yellow creation to the city to celebrate the Year of the Rooster!

Pam Anderton, the Chinese New Year co-ordinator for Ormskirk Schoo, said: "The Hung Gar Friendship Association very kindly volunteered to train our sixth form students to perform the Chinese Lion dance and Dragon Dance for a Chinese Culture Challenge Day at Ormskirk School last summer. As a way of thanking them, we volunteered to be fully involved in the Chinese New Year celebrations.

"It takes a lot of committed people to make the dragon dance a success as you get tired very quickly and have to swap over a lot.

"Ormskirk School provided a full team who tirelessly performed routines such as Rock'n'Roll, Roller Coaster, and Grass Cutter through the streets of Liverpool. We are very proud of our students, staff and friends of Ormskirk School who not only dedicated their Sundays to train, but who also provided the main entertainment to thousands of visitors at the Chinese New Year celebrations in Liverpool."

Headteacher, Martin Kerridge, added: "I am extremely proud of the Ormskirk team whose wonderful partnership with the Hung Gar was demonstrated in such a spectacular fashion in the celebration of the Chinese New Year."

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Martin Mere news

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Splashtastic fun puddle jumping at WWT Martin Mere Wetland Centre this half term

Dress up warm and get your wellies on this February half term as WWT Martin Mere Wetland Centre hosts the third North West Puddle Jumping Championships.

The event, from 11th to 19th February, is encouraging children of all ages to get out into the fresh air and have fun jumping in puddles, competing against each other for the biggest splash.

This year WWT's new children's character, Dusty Duck is joining in the fun and helping kids create the biggest, craziest splash possible. Dusty was exclusively designed by the world-famous Aardman studios to help celebrate WWT's 70th anniversary by getting children closer to nature.

As well as the main puddle jumping competition arenas, there will be practice zones set up to help entrants perfect their splashing techniques before the 2pm competition. It's only 50p to enter and every entrant will receive a 'splashtastic' sticker to acknowledge their puddle jumping skills – with the daily 'super-splasher' receiving prizes.

Jumps will be judged on the enthusiasm of the jumper, creativity of the jump and the height of the splash. Normal admission charges apply to participate in this event.

In addition, other jumping and welly activities include taking part in our frog jump between 11am and 12.30pm and see how far you can throw a wellington boot in our welly shot putt event between 1pm and 2pm as well as letting the kids run wild in the Adventure playground after watching hundreds of Whooper swans feed on the Mere at 3pm from the new Discovery hide.

WWT Martin Mere Wetland Centre is open every day (except Christmas Day) from 9.30am to 4.30pm during winter months and parking is free of charge. Situated off the A59, it is signposted from the M61, M58 and M6. The Centre is also accessible via the Southport to Manchester and the Liverpool to Preston line by train from Burscough Rail Stations. Visit the web site http://www.wwt.org.uk/martinmere/ to find out what's on all year round at Martin Mere and the other eight WWT Wetland Centres.

Visit the web site www.wwt.org.uk/martinmere to find out what's on the reserve at the moment as well as all the upcoming events

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Fewer drink drivers are caught on the road, say watchdogs

Report by **Henry James**

THE NUMBER of motorists who passed tests for drink and drug driving in West Lancs over the festive period has increased from the previous year.

In West Lancs alone, a total of 1,398 people took breath tests over the festive period (December 2016) with 96.4% of them passing, compared to 96% of 1,299 people the year before, so a slight improvement on the year before (December 2015). The December 2014 test showed the highest numbers of drivers passing, 97.7% of the 2,393 people tested.

In West Lancashire, 31 people took festive drug tests this Christmas, but only 20 passed – meaning that 65% failed. The year before, the first time drug-driving tests were implemented, a total of 19 drivers took drug tests across Lancashire (only region-wide statistics were recorded) and only eight passed, meaning that fewer (57%) drivers failed the drug tests on the first year.

Across the whole of Lancashire, a total of 3,266 drivers took breath tests over the festive period and only 95.9% passed – meaning that at 96.4%, West Lancs drivers passed more than the average across Lancs as a whole.

Lancashire's police and crime commissionerm Clive Grunshaw, said: "Drink and drug-driving will not be tolerated here in Lancashire and it is our job to divert these motorists from getting behind the wheel before they ruin lives with such mindless acts.

PCC Clive Grunshaw

"We're committed to making Lancashire's roads as safe as possible and these targeted campaigns make a real difference at the time of year when the dangers of drink driving should be at the forefront of everyone's mind. I also hope that this is a reminder for motorists all year round that we will continue to take necessary action to ensure our roads are free from drug and drink drivers."

To report someone who you suspect of driving whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs, contact the police on 101.

New social group hopes to connect isolated residents

By **Danielle Thompson**

WEST Lancs residents of all ages looking to make new friends and try out new activities are invited to join a new social group in Bickerstaffe.

The Divine Days Community Arts Project, which has bases in Burscough and Skelmersdale, was founded by Katie Whitehead, who runs therapeutic and educational programmes for individuals with additional needs, including creative dance and drama workshops.

Members of the community group have launched Bickerstaffe Connections this week.

The monthly two-hour sessions will feature activities including dominoes, draughts, boccia (similar to indoor bowls), chess, cards, games, puzzles, clay modelling, painting, knitting, and more!

One of the organisers, Edward McCarthy, said: "Divine Days' Bickerstaffe Connections is a friendly social group and we look forward to welcoming you to join us at regular social afternoons at the Mission, with other local older people who come to enjoy a few happy hours out and about in a relaxed atmosphere sharing light refreshments and friendly company with others.

"Come for a cuppa and a chat, or perhaps enjoy reviving past hobbies and interests with us."

The next sessions will be held on Monday, March 6; Monday, April 3 and Monday, May 8. Entry costs £2 per session. For more details, email Edward@divinedays.co.uk or call 07971 299 606.

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Sanctuary seeks good homes for cats

STAFF at a West Lancashire animal sanctuary which cares for more than 350 creatures at any one time, are seeking good homes for their cats.

The Woodlands Animal Sanctuary in Sandy Lane, Holmeswood takes in a variety of small domestic and farm animals. It opened in 2005 and is funded entirely by donations.

Now, staff are launching a fresh appeal to find homes for their pets - especially their cats, starting with nine-month-old black kitten Whitney.

Vickie McDerby from Woodlands said: "We are looking for caring homes for lovely little souls just like Whitney. She came to Woodlands as a nine-week-old kitten with her mum Matilda and three siblings after their owner suddenly passed away. They were severely malnourished and fighting infections meaning we weren't sure, at times, if we could save them. Whitney is very affectionate and finally ready to go to a new home."

For more details ring the sanctuary on 01704 823293.

Market stall raises funds for family support charity

A STALL on Ormskirk Market manned by volunteers raised £192 for a charity which provides a helping hand for families in West Lancashire.

Home-Start Central Lancashire supports families with young children and helps parents as they learn to cope and improve their confidence.

They also recruit and train volunteers, who are parents or have parenting experience to visit families in their own homes for a couple of hours each week or help in one of Home-Start's family groups.

The next training course for potential volunteers will start on Friday, February 24 at Park Children's Centre in Barnes Road, Skelmersdale.

Training usually runs one day a week for six weeks.

For more information, call Home-Start on 01257 241636 or email enquiries@homestartcentral-lancs.org.uk.

Volunteer Ruth Melling presents the cheque to Angela Melling, manager of Home-Start Central Lancashire

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Health chiefs in renewed call for sick to 'examine their options'

HEALTH chiefs in West Lancashire are once again urging residents to examine their options to help ease pressure on local A&E and 999 services.

The Examine your Options campaign, aims to give people information so that they know where to go in the first instance, to get fast, expert advice when they need it and how to help themselves and their families if they have a minor illness.

Dr John Caine, a GP in Parbold and chair of the NHS West Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), said: "Ultimately, our A&E and 999 services are for serious and life-threatening injuries only and we can all ease pressure on our A&E department, by using other more appropriate services when we find ourselves ill."

Your local pharmacy can offer free, confidential and expert advice on a range of health issues. They can also help residents to prepare for many common winter illnesses and offer advice on which medicines to keep in stock at home.

People can find a wealth of advice about hundreds of health conditions and details of GPs, pharmacies in their local area by visiting www.nhs.uk. This website also includes a symptom checker.

When you need medical help or advice fast, but it is not a 999 emergency, residents can also call the NHS 111 service. This is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and calls are free from mobiles and landlines.

Your GP should be the first point of contact for non-emergency illnesses that people can't treat themselves. A GP is available from 8am to 6.30pm weekdays and residents in West Lancashire can now also see a GP on Saturdays from 10am to 4pm and Sundays from 10am to 2pm at the Sandy Lane Health Centre in Skelmersdale, by making an appointment through their usual GP practice.

And recently launched in West Lancashire residents can now see a GP on Thursday evenings 6.30 to 8pm, at the Ormskirk walk-in centre and on Fridays from 6.30 to 8pm at the Ormskirk walk-in centre.

To make an appointment to see a GP in these extended hours, again residents simply need to do this through their usual GP surgery.

West Lancashire has two walk-in centres. The West Lancashire Health Centre at Ormskirk Hospital, Wigan Road, Ormskirk is open from 8am to 7.30pm, seven days a week; and the Skelmersdale Walk-in Centre at The Concourse, is open from 8am to 7.30pm, Monday to Friday and 9am to 5pm on Saturdays and Sundays.

The experts in these centres can treat a wide range of illnesses and conditions, like minor infections, rashes, stomach upsets, small cuts and bruises, strains and sprains, coughs, colds and flu-like symptoms and more.

Residents can also manage their repeat prescriptions and make GP appointments from the comfort of their own home by using the new free Patient Access website and smartphone app. Simply search for Patient Access in the app store.

Dr John Caine

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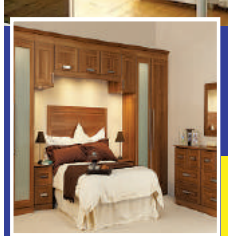

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Picture House releases details of its Spring season

PARBOLD Picture House has released details of its Sunday films and live transmissions for the Spring of 2017.

Wild will be shown on Sunday, February 19. It is based on the true story chronicle of one woman's solo, 1,100 mile hike along the USA's Pacific coast as a way to recover from a recent personal tragedy.

On Sunday, March 5 Sully: Miracle on the Hudson is being presented. It is directed by Tom Hanks and stars Tom Hanks. The film is set on January 15, 2009 when a plane was landed on the Hudson River saving all 155 aboard. But the investigation threatened the pilot's reputation and career.

The National Theatre NT Live production of Henrik Ibsen's Hedda Gabler is being shown on Thursday, March 9.

Audiences can see Mustang on Sunday, March 19 at 7pm. This spirited, haunting and genuinely engrossing Turkish drama was a thoroughly deserving (and in hindsight, most unlucky) Best Foreign Language Film Oscar nominee last year.

There is to be a presentation of the National Theatre production of George Bernard Shaw's Saint Joan starring Gemma Arterton on Tuesday, March 28.

Ruth Wilson and Rafe Spall in Hedda Gabler. Photo by Jen Versweyveld

On Sunday, April 2 people can see Nocturnal Animals. In this film an art gallery owner is haunted by her ex-husband's novel, a violent thriller she interprets as a veiled threat and a symbolic revenge tale.

Steven Spielberg's BFG is being shown on Sunday, April 16. In this film a young girl, the Queen of England and a Big Friendly Giant (Mark Rylance) set out on an adventure to capture the evil, man-eating giants who have been invading the human world.

The Australian ballet Coppelia can be seen on Tuesday, April 25.

On Tuesday, May 16 there is to be a National Theatre presentation of Twelfth Night starring Tamsin Greig as Malvolia in a new twist on Shakesperare's classic comedy of mistaken identity.

Lyn Paul to star in Blood Brothers at resort's theatre

2017 marks 30 years since Bill Kenwright's production of the international smash hit musical Blood Brothers first toured the UK.

In celebration, the iconic musical will visit theatres across the country including, for the first time, Southport Theatre, from Monday, February 13 to Saturday, February 18.

Hailed as one of the best musicals of all time, Blood Brothers, written by award-winning playwright Willy Russell has triumphed across the globe. Scooping up no fewer than four awards for best musical in London, and seven Tony Award nominations on Broadway.

This epic tale of Liverpool life started as a play, performed at a Liverpool comprehensive school in 1981, before opening at the Liverpool Empire in 1983 and completing sell out seasons in the US, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Japan.

Blood Brothers also ran in London's West End for 24 years, exceeding 10,000 performances, one of only three musicals ever to achieve that milestone.

No stranger to Blood Brothers, 'the definitive Mrs Johnstone' Lyn Paul returns to the iconic role, one she first played in 1997.

Lyn played Mrs Johnstone in the final West End performances at the Phoenix Theatre in 2012. She has also starred in the UK tour of Cabaret in 2013.

Lyn rose to fame in the early 1970s as a member of the New Seekers. She was the featured vocalist on their 1972 Eurovision Song Contest entry, Beg, Steal or Borrow, with which they came second, and lead vocalist on the 1974 number-one hit You Won't Find Another Fool Like Me.

Among the group's other works, they recorded the song I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing, adapted from an advertising jingle for Coca-Cola, which sold over 20 million copies and still remains one of the 100 best-selling singles in the UK.

Lyn Paul in Blood Brothers

The cast for Blood Brothers includes Sarah Jane Buckley, Dean Chisnall, Mark Hutchinson, Sean Jones, Adam Search, Danielle Corlass, Tim Churchill, Graham Martin, Laura Harrison, Alison Crawford, Graeme Kinniburgh, Henry Regan and Josh Capper.

Blood Brothers tells the captivating and moving story of twin boys separated at birth, only to be reunited by a twist of fate and a mother's haunting secret. The memorable score includes A Bright New Day, Marilyn Monroe and the emotionally charged hit Tell Me It's Not True.

When Mrs Johnstone, a young mother, is deserted by her husband and left to her own devices to provide for seven hungry children she takes a job as a housekeeper in order to make ends meet.

It is not long before her brittle world crashes around her when she discovers herself to be pregnant yet again – this time with twins!

In a moment of weakness and desperation, she enters a secret pact with her employer which leads inexorably to the show's shattering climax.

BW

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3*, 10*, 17*, 24*, 31* Mar	6*, 13*, 20*, 27* Mar
21, 28 April	3, 10, 17, 24 Apr
from £59.95	from £109.95

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Bank Hol 28 Apr	6, 13, 20, 27 Mar
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7, 21 Apr	7, 14, 21, 28 Apr	3, 10, 17, 24 Apr
5, 12, 19 May	5, 12, 19, 26 May	1, 8, 15, 22, 29 May

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7, 21 Apr	3, 10, 17, 24 Apr
5, 12, 19 May	1, 8, 15, 22, 29 May

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2, 9, 23 Apr	3, 10, 17, 24 Apr

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3, 24, 31 Mar	6, 13, 20, 27 Mar
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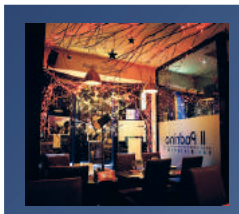

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HOME ENTERTAINMENT

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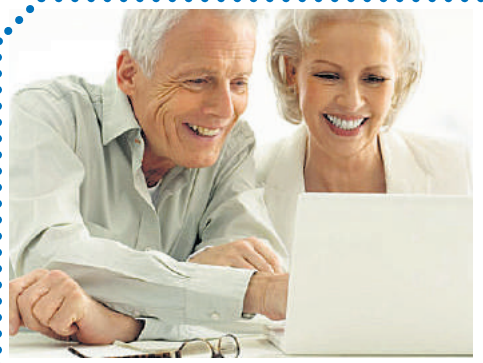

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HD/FREE VIEW RECEIVCER ICECRYPT T2200 excellent spec, manual absolute bargain £25 could deliver? 07708 681331

PHILIPS 42INCH/TV HD ready 42" plasma very slight hair line on side of screen, hardly noticeable hence only £45 could deliver? 07708 681331

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LEATHER SETTEE Stokers 3&2 Seater black leather Settees. Good condition, lovely Settees only selling due to house move. £400 ono. 3 Seater 2350x1metre 2 Seater 1800x1metre 07792805303

HENRY HOOVER excellent condition comes with all attachments and spare bags £25 01704 880305

GUEST BED folding, good cond £35. Car jack and accessories £20 0151526 1759

SUITCASES Antler brand, two available, grey, 2 wheels, 4.7kg, 69cm(H) 47cm(W) 25cm(D). vgc. £20 each ono. Genuine reason for sale 01704572019

FOOD PROCESSOR argos XB9018, unused from new £25 0151928 1628

VACUUM CLEANER Pifco hand held, like new £25ono. B&D masonry drill, good working order, with case £15. 07780 850905

TROUSER PRESS electric corby 440, floor standing, upright, used twice £40 0151932 1508

LEATHER HEADBOARD double, silver, fire labelled £20. 01704 877801

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DINING ROOM SUITE table, 6 chairs, 2 carvers, mahogany, good cont £100. 01704 226143

SIDEBOARD bow fronted mahogany 1920's, 2 outside cupboards, 3 centre drawers, good cond £50. 01704 576856

KINGSIZE MATTRESS sealy, firm support, posturepedic backcare plus, fairly new, used in spare room, cost £250 sell £50ono. 07546 911818

DRAWERS set of black £70. Coffee maker £40. Hoover washing machine £100. Lamp £40. 01695 35622

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HOUSE AND HOME

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CORNER CUPBOARD mahogany style modern £12. Gilt framed Mirror 33" x 12" £5 07929 015283

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£55 ono 07792805303

TOWEL RAIL Beautiful large, Victorian style, with chrome rail and cast iron radiator insert. Vintage not new. W960mmxH935mm. Needs cosmetic refurb. £150 07801811115

WALL UNIT Mahogany corner display unit with glazed top with interior light and base cupboard ex stokers excellent condition £150 07751924207

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LEATHER SETEE Brown 2 seater. £45. 01704870669

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HOUSE AND HOME

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HOUSE AND HOME

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MISC

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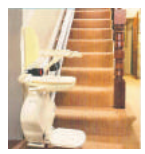

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- ☐ Motoring
- ☐ Toys & Games

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Daytime telephone no:

3 YOUR ADVERT'S CONTENT: Please write in **BLOCK LETTERS** • 24 words max.

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Grosvenor Waterford

• ESTATE AGENTS •

Fazakerley
Moor Lane
- 3 Bedroom Detached
- EPC Rating E
- Sought After Location
- Conservatory

£279,950

Aintree Village
Canterbury Close
- 4 Bedroom Bow Bay Semi
- EPC Rating TBC
- Three Reception Rooms
- En Suite to Bedroom 4

NEW £227,500

Aintree Village
Cheltenham Close
- 4 Bedroomn Semi Detached
- EPC Rating D
- Extended and Improved
- No Chain

REDUCED £215,000

Aintree Village
Bradfield Avenue
- 4 Bedroom Semi Detached
- EPC Rating D
- Impressively Extended
- En Suite

NEW £204,950

Netherton
Moorbridge Close
- 4 Bedroom Detached
- EPC Rating D
- Two Reception Rooms
- uPVC Double Glazing

£199,950

Netherton
Regent Avenue
- 4 Bedroom Detached
- EPC Rating D
- Large Conservatory
- En Suite

REDUCED £199,950

Orrell Park
Oakmere Close
- 4 Bedroom Detached
- EPC Rating D
- Conservatory
- Stylish Kitchen/Breakfast Room

£199,950

Aintree Village
Canterbury Close
- 3 Bedroom Bow Bay Semi
- EPC Rating E
- Extended
- Farmland Views

REDUCED £194,999

Melling
Marc Avenue
- 3 Bedroom Semi Detached
- EPC Rating C
- Extended and Improved
- 3 Reception Rooms

£179,950

Aintree Village
Oakham Drive
- 3 Bedroom Sefton Semi
- EPC Rating D
- Large Plot
- No Chain

REDUCED £179,950

Fazakerley
Papillon Drive
- 3 Bedroom Detached
- EPC Rating C
- Large Plot
- Garage

NEW £175,000

Aintree
Sherwoods Lane
- 4 Bedroom Semi Detached
- EPC Rating D
- Impresively Extended
- Open Plan Layout

£175,000

Eton Drive
- 2 Bedroom Bungalow
- EPC Rating TBC
- Recent Roof & Rewire
- Sought After Location

NEW £174,950

Fazakerley
East Orchard Lane
- 3 Bedroom Semi Detached
- EPC Rating D
- Recently Renovated
- New Kitchen & Bathroom

£174,950

Fazakerley
Blueberry Fields
- 3 Bedroom Detached
- EPC Rating D
- uPVC Double Glazing
- Gas Central Heating

NEW £169,999

Fazakerley
Garden Lane
- 3 Bed Semi Detached
- EPC Rating F
- 2 Reception Rooms
- uPVC Double Glazing

£169,950

Kirkby
Dumfries Way
- 4 Bedroom Detached
- EPC Rating C
- Conservatory
- Garage

£169,950

Aintree Village
Winchester Avenue
- 3 Bedroom Semi Detached
- EPC Rating E
- Extended and Improved
- Conservatory

£169,000

Aintree Village
Oriel Drive
- 3 Bedroom Semi Detached
- EPC Rating E
- Stylish Kitchen & Bathroom
- Lovely Rear Garden

£168,500

Melling
Columbine Close
- 3 Bedroom Townhouse
- EPC Rating C
- Two En Suites
- Plus Ground Floor Shower

£164,950

Aintree Village
Oriel Drive
- 3 Bedroom Semi Detached
- EPC Rating D
- Upvc Double Glazing
- Gas Central Heating

£162,000

Aintree Village
Oriel Drive
- 3 Bedroom Semi Detached
- EPC Rating G
- Extended
- Good Sized Rear Garden

£159,950

Orrell Park
Moss Lane
- 3 Bedroom End Terrace
- EPC Rating E
- Two Reception Rooms
- Detached Garage

£154,950

Fazakerley
Lower Lane
- 3 Bedroom Dormer Bungalow
- EPC Rating E
- Very Large Plot
- Two Reception Rooms

£154,950

Fazakerley
Barlows Lane
- 3 Bedroom Detached
- EPC Rating D
- Stylish Kitchen/Diner
- Modern Bathroom

NEW £152,500

Magfull
Swan Walk
- 2 Bedroom Bungalow
- EPC Rating D
- Conservatory
- Stylish Kitchen

NEW £149,950

Fazakerley
Barlows Lane
- 3 Bedroom Detached
- EPC Rating D
- Racecourse Views
- Downstairs W.C.

NEW £149,950

Fazakerley
Lower Lane
- 3 Bedroom Semi Detached
- EPC E
- Generous Plot
- New Boiler

£147,495

Kirkby
Stiles Road
- Modern 3 Bedroom Detached
- EPC Rating E
- Integral Garage
- No Chain

£139,950

Netherton
Parkfield Avenue
- 3 Bedroom Semi Detached
- EPC Rating E
- New Roof
- Integrated Appliances

£129,950

Magfull
Chilton Court
- 2 Bedroom Apartment
- EPC Rating B
- 1st Floor
- En Suite

£125,000

Aintree
Melling Road
- 2 Bedroom Ground Floor Flat
- EPC Rating E
- Racecourse Views
- Gardens

£119,950

Fazakerley
Longdown Road
- Three Bedroom End Town House
- EPC Rating D
- Double Glazed
- Gas Central Heating

£116,950

Norris Green
East Lancashire Road
- 3 Bedroom End Terrace
- EPC Rating D
- Garage
- Rear Garden

£114,950

Aintree
Lytham Close
- 3 Bedroom Semi Detached
- EPC Rating D
- No Chain
- Modern Kitchen/Diner

REDUCED £110,000

Walton
Regina Road
- 3 Bedroom Terrace
- EPC Rating D
- uPVC Double Glazing
- Gas Central Heating

£109,950

Aintree
Rugby Road
- 3 Bedroom Terrace
- EPC Rating E
- uPVC Double Glazing
- Gas Central Heating

£99,950

Old Roan
Orchard Hey
- 3 Bedroom Townhouse
- EPC D
- No Chain
- Two Reception Rooms

£99,950

Bootle
Hawthorne Road
- 3 Bedroom Semi Detached
- EPC Rating D
- Stylish Kitchen/Diner
- uPVC Double Glazing

£97,500

Fazakerley
Ferrey Road
- 3 Bedroom Townhouse
- EPC Rating D
- Extended and Improved
- New Worcester Boiler

£95,000

Aintree
Inglis Road
- 2 Bedroom Townhouse
- EPC Rating C
- Modern Kitchen & Bathroom
- Two Double Bedrooms

REDUCED £94,950

Melling
Columbine Close
- 2 bed Apartment
- EPC Rating C
- Ground Floor
- No Chain

£84,950

Fazakerley
Manica Crescent
- 3 Bedroom Townhouse
- EPC Rating D
- Two Reception Rooms
- No Chain

£79,999

Aintree
Albany Road
- 2 Bedroom Terrace
- EPC Rating C
- Extended
- Modern Kitchen

£79,950

Fazakerley
Jean Walk
- 2 Bedroom Townhouse
- EPC Rating C
- Stylish Bathroom
- Garage

REDUCED £75,000

Fazakerley
Amanda Road
- 2 Bedroom Townhouse
- EPC Rating E
- uPVC Double Glazing
- Fitted Kitchen

£68,500

Anfield
Castlewood Road
- 3 Bedroom Terrace
- EPC Rating D
- No Chain
- uPVC Double Glazing

£65,000

Aintree
Melling Avenue
- 2 Bed Mid Terrace
- EPC Rating E
- Gas Central Heating
- uPVC Double Glazing

£64,950

Liverpool
Scarisbrick Drive
- 3 Bedroom End Townhouse
- EPC Rating D
- No Chain
- uPVC Double Glazing

£59,950

Kirkby
South Park Court
- 1 Bedroom Apartment
- EPC Rating D
- No Chain
- 2nd Floor

£59,950

Fazakerley
Moor Court
- 1 Bedroom Apartment
- EPC Rating D
- 1st Floor
- Garage & Storage Shed

£59,950

Bootle
Stanley Road
- Ground Floor One Bed Flat
- EPC Rating D
- uPVC Double Glazing
- Gas Central Heating

£34,500

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CLASSIFIED

MOTHER AND BABY

BABY WALKER tildo wooden activity, hardly used ex cond. Babies high chair, still in box, ex cond £40 for both 0151531 7785

MOTHERCARE BED low pine toddler bed 140 x 70cm, good used condition, can deliver locally, includes mattress if required £45 ono Birkdale 01704-568606 or 07850-935406

MOTHERCARE FIRST BED Pine low bed 190 x 85cm, good used condition, takes standard 6'3''x2'6'' mattress, included if required £55 ono Birkdale 01704-568606 or 07850-935406

BABY GATE Lindham pressure fit, walk through safety gate £12 ono Birkdale 01704-568606 or 07850-935406

LITTLE TIKES Picnic table with attached benches, faded but sound, can deliver locally £10 ono Birkdale 01704-568606 or 07850-935406

PINE COT 140 x 70cm, good used condition, can deliver locally, includes mattress if required £30 ono Birkdale 01704-568606 or 07850-935406

CHILD CARRIER Little life cross country child carrier (red) suitable from 6mths - 3 years, excellent condition £35 01704 892752

SMART TRIKE Lilac smart trike, with sun canopy and bag, good condition £15 01704 892752

MOTORING

VW GOLF Mark 5 (2004-2008). Set deluxe car mats. Black with blue trim. Hardly used. £15. 01704 576626

CARAVAN ACE older type, 2 berth tourer, dry no leaks 10' long, awning, oven, heater, bottles, step up £495. 01704 876907

MANUAL TYRE bead breaker for fitting tyres £45. 0151 527 2392

ROOF RACK 1 metre x 2 metres, heavy duty £15 ono Birkdale 01704-568606 or 07850-935406

SPORTS EQUIPMENT

PRO PLUSTREADMILL Electric treadmill £90 buyer collects Crosby 0151 9313074

WANTED 1980's Old BMX Bikes and Parts, Skyway, Raleigh Burner, GT, Haro, Mongoose, Diamond Back, Torker, Firebird. Any Condition Accepted. Prompt Collection. 07912 296445

TREADMILL DKN Ecorum RRP £499 selling for £250, full instructions, as new. 01695 420156

WEIGHTS BENCH dumbell and rack, plus weights belt £70ono. 0151476 0362

GOLF BAG childs, dunlop, 4 irons, 1 putter, balls £15. Golf Bag, 9 irons, 2 putters, 3 drivers, balls £25. Golf trolley£8 07929 015283

GOLF CLUBS FX RAM Black full matching set graphite shafts and complete with bag and stand £190 07751285336

LADIES WILSON berg golf clubs 3 woods 8 irons putter lovely bargain £30 01515319425/07773242918

GOLF BAG texan biegh carry with stand double strape used once bargain £30 01515319425/07773242918

CHIP N run golf club new left handed bargain £10 01515319425/07773242918

GOLF CLUBS Mitsushiba graphite set. 3 woods, irons 3-9,2 wedges. £100 01704 875561

GOLF TROLLEY Hippo Elite, wide wheels, excellent condition. £15 01704 875561

EXERCISE BIKE V fit recumbent exercise bike, great condition, 8 levels of magnetic resistance. £40 07801811115

NEW CALLAWAY left handed diablo hybrid 3h stiff shaft bargain £49 01515319425/07773242918

WOMEN'S HEALTH gymball 65cm, turquoise. Hardly use, perfect condition. £5 Phone Sat/Sun only 07855222552

SPORTS EQUIPMENT

HOCKEY STICK with carry case may deliver £8 ono 01515263851

GOLF BALLS dunlop, 7pks of 3 cost £26.99, new unused, 92x53x51 photo available £7.50. 07772 342722

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GOLF TROLLEY Pull along type £8 ono Birkdale 01704-568606 or 07850-935406

TOYS AND GAMES

MODEL SOLDIERS Over 100 model Napoleonic soldiers. Mainly 54mm White metal From 50p. View Churchtown. 01704620793

CHESS SET Hand carved in soapstone. King 6ins. In presentation box /board 01704 875561

FOOTBALL TABLE 56 x 87 x 53 £8 079396 88447

BUILD-A-BEARS with clothes £10 each. Lego wanted. 01704 892998

REMYMARTIN BARREL Polished barrel with range of games inside. On EBay at £100. Sale £70 01704 875561

ELC BUILD-IT Construction toy. Starter set and add on. Excellent condition. £10 07801811115

LEGO DUPLO (And megabloks mixed) large quantity, approx 4kg. £20 07801811115

ELC ROSEBUD Hospital, figures and ambulance. £25 07801811115

FISHER PRICE Garage. £10 07801811115

ELC TOYS Wooden Easel £7. Pink microphone stand £7. Vintage baby gym £10 07801811115

LITTLE TYKES Kitchen. £5 07801811115

BUILDING BLOCKS 3 tubs. £6 07801811115

HARRY POTTER DVD collection 8 films, film 6 has a limited edition case & comes with bonus scenes. immaculate condition £30 01704 875299

ELC KITCHEN Wooden kitchen in light pink and green. Includes accessories kettle, toaster, fridge etc. Good condition. £60 pictures available on request. 07860561868

APOLLO HONEYBEAR Bike with stabilisers, 9 inch frame, pink and yellow, suit 4-5 years £10 ono Birkdale 01704-568606 or 07850-935406

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Lydiate Parish Council is looking to appoint a Parish Clerk, to act as Proper Officer and Responsible Finance Officer, in order to undertake a wide range of duties to ensure that decisions taken by the Council are carried out and that legal and financial responsibilities are met. This includes monitoring and balancing the Council's budget and ensuring financial management information is produced.
You could have experience of the local government system, administrative processes, implementation of Council policies and the provision of advice and guidance on statutory and legislative matters. Responsibilities range from risk management to public relations and include the management of Lydiate Village Centre and a small team of Grounds Maintenance staff who look after local parks and open spaces.
You will need strong leadership and negotiation skills, combined with experience of delivering value for money services against agreed budgets, ideally gained in a public sector environment. An accomplished manager of both resources and assets, you will have impeccable communication and report writing skills, and a record of realising positive improvements.
Hours: 20 hours per week (Monday to Friday plus occasional evening meetings)
Salary: Grade I - £32,164 - £36,019 (NJC SCP 37-41) pro rata
Location: Lydiate Village Centre, Lambshear Lane, Lydiate, L31 2LA
Application forms and further details are available from:
Barbara Weightman, Parish Clerk
Email: lpc@lydiateparishcouncil.gov.uk
Tel: 0151 527 2662
Closing date for receipt of applications is 26 February 2017
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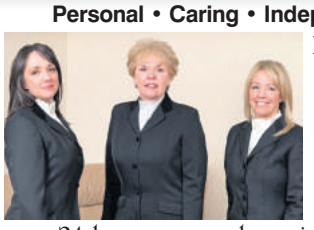
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IN MEMORIAM

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11th February 2016

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only lent,
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quietly sleeps,
our Zac
(our sunshine)
we loved but could
not keep.
Love and miss you
forever and always,
Nan and Grandad
XX

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

BAXTER AUDREY

The family of Audrey would like to thank all who attended the funeral on Wednesday, also thank you for the kind words, cards and donations. Thank you to Rev David Dickinson for a caring service, Hesketh Bank Bowling Club for the refreshments, and a special thanks to Newland and Wilkinson Funeral Directors for their kind and dignified arrangements.

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS
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CRANE JAMES (ALLEN)

The family of the late Allen would like to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for their kind messages of sympathy, floral tributes and donations received for the RSPCA during their recent sad loss of Allen. Special thanks to Peter Giles for a lovely service and to Skelmersdale Funeral Service for their dignified funeral arrangements.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

LYSON HANNAH NICOLE

Mark Beth & family would like to express their heartfelt thanks to all relatives, friends and neighbours, for all their messages of condolence, sympathy cards and the many donations for Teenage Cancer Trust and The Zak Vali Foundation, being received during their recent sad loss of their "Beautiful Hannah". Special thanks also to Doctors & nursing staff at the many hospitals Hannah was treated especially The Christie Manchester. Thank you to her GP Dr Rachel Tilley at Burscough Health centre & Palliative care. A special personal Thank you to the District nursing team who cared for Hannah & the family daily. A final thanks to MLS Independent Funeral Directors & Mr John Milton for speaking about Hannah at her Funeral service.

DAY ANNE

The family of the late Anne Day would like to express heartfelt thanks to all relatives, friends and neighbours for all their sympathy cards, donations and attendance at the funeral service. Special thanks go to the Burscough District Nurses for their exceptional care and to Ray Cooper who officiated the service and to Lorraine and all at Cookson Tyrer for their dignified funeral arrangements.
XX

BIRTHS

Pamela Williams & Duncan Rowbotham

are over the moon to announce the arrival of their baby boy

HARRY JAMES WILLIAMS

on 16th January 2017, weighing 8lb 13oz

DEATHS

ORD JOYCE

27th January 2017
In hospital
Aged 90 Years

Re United with her Husband John and Daughter Anne. Wonderful Memories of Happy Times, will be sadly missed by all her family and friends. Service and Cremation at West Lancashire Crematorium Pippin Street Burscough on Friday 10th February at 1.45 pm. All enquires to Graham J Clegg Funeral Service 7 Dover Road Maghull L31 5JB Tel 0151 520 3330

PROFESSOR GEORGE CARTER

George died peacefully on 29th January 2017 surrounded by his family

Devoted Husband to the late Hilda, greatly loved Dad and Father-in-law of Sue and Steve and wonderful Granddad to Chris. Great scientist, loving family man and loyal friend. In our hearts forever. Funeral service will take place at Southport Crematorium on Thursday 9th February at 2pm. All enquiries to Hunters Funeral Directors, 128B Burscough Street, Ormskirk. Tel 01695 572997.

EVANS VERA

30th January 2017

Peacefully at Aughton Park Care Home, Aughton. Aged 88 years formerly of Clairville, Birkdale.

Retired chief probation officer of Lancashire and Merseyside Funeral Service at West Lancashire Crematorium, Pippin Street, Burscough on Friday 10th February 2017 at 4.00pm. No floral tributes by request. Donations if desired are being gratefully received for North West Cancer Research. All enquiries to H Hardman & Co., Independent Family Funeral Directors of Elizabeth House. 57A Cottage Lane, Ormskirk. Tel: 01695 581769 / 720012

DEATHS

ZUEGER TONY

29th January 2017
Aged 76 years

Devoted Husband of Angela, much loved Father to Helen and Phillip. He will be greatly missed by all his family and friends. Service to be held at Southport Crematorium on Friday 10th February at 10.00 am. Donations are being gratefully received in lieu of flowers for Down's Syndrome Association. Donations and enquiries to Howard's Funeral Directors, 1 - 5 Roe Lane, Southport, PR9 9DR. Telephone: 01704 500086.

GATEWOOD BILL

January 13th 2017
Peacefully aged 89 years

Devoted Husband of Eileen and beloved Godfather. Bill will be sadly missed by all his family and friends including many children of all ages in who's hearts a magical place will forever remain for Uncle Bill. Funeral Service and Cremation will be held at Thornton Crematorium on Tuesday February 14 at 1.20pm. No flowers please but if desired donations to The Salvation Army or Claire House Childrens Hospice c/o H. Leslie Humphrey 69 Liverpool Road, Crosby L23 5SE. Tel 0151 924 4805.

FISHER IAN ALASTAIR

27th January 2017
Aged 70 years

Died peacefully at home with his family. Dearly loved Husband, Father, Grandfather, Brother, Uncle and Friend to many. Thanksgiving service at 1.30pm on Friday 10th February at St Michael's Church, Blundellsands, L23 8SP. Family flowers only, but donations if desired to Macmillan or Woodlands Hospice c/o H-Leslie Humphreys, 69 Liverpool Road, Crosby, L23 5SE. Tel 0151 924 4805.

DEATHS

WINROW ETHEL

30th January 2017
Peacefully at Silverbirch Lodge Nursing Home, aged 96 Years

Beloved Wife of the Late Ray. Much Loved Mum of Jean. Funeral Service at St Thomas Church Lydiate on Tuesday 14th February at 12.00 noon. Cremation following at West Lancashire Crematorium, Pippin Street Burscough. Family Flowers only please but donations if desired for St. Thomas Church c/o Graham J Clegg Funeral Service, 7 Dover Road, Maghull L31 5JB or via www.cleggfunerals.co.uk

CATHERINE HOLME (Conroy)

Aged 73

1st February 2017 at Fazakerley Hospital where she was a nurse for many years.

Dear Mum of Anita and Patrick. Much loved Granny of Nancy (deceased), Edward and Sylvie and Son-In-Law Andrew. Her Brothers and Sisters, Nieces, Nephews and friends are heartbroken. The family would like to thank all the staff of Fazakerley Hospital, particularly Ward 16 for their wonderful care in her final illness. The Funeral mass will take place at Our Lady's, Lydiate, February 15th at 10am, followed by the burial at St. Thomas' Church, Lydiate. All enquiries to Craven Funeral Directors, 44 Liverpool Road, Lydiate, L31 2LZ. Tel: 0151 531 7890

EDEY GERARD

28th January 2017
Peacefully in hospital surrounded by his family

Loving Husband of Sheila, Father to Gill and Jeremy and Grandfather of Eleanor, Alex, Mathew, Lydia and Jenna. Gerard will be sadly missed by all his family and friends. Service and Cremation at Thornton Crematorium on Friday, February 10th 2017 at 2pm. No flowers please but if desired. Donations to St Joseph Hospice, Ince Road, Thornton L23 4UE. H Leslie Humphreys, 69 Liverpool Road, Crosby L23 5SE Tel: 0151 924 4805

DEATHS

FITZGERALD ROSALIE

1st February 2017
Aged 80 years

Reunited with her much loved Husband John. Loving Mum and Grandmother to her 5 children and 7 Grandchildren. Rosalie will be sadly missed by all her family and friends. Requiem Mass at SS Peter & Pauls Church, Crosby on Wednesday February 15th 2017 at 10.45am followed by Cremation at Thornton Crematorium. No flowers please but if desired donations to St Josephs Hospice c/o H Leslie Humphreys, 69 Liverpool Road, Crosby L23 5SE Tel: 0151 924 4805

ANTHONY (TONY) MYERSCOUGH

1st February 2017
Aged 81

Will be sadly missed by all his loving family and friends. Funeral mass to be held at Our Lady of Compassion, Formby, Monday 13th February 12:45pm. Followed by Thornton Crematorium. Family flowers only, but donations gratefully received for Marina Dalglish Appeal and Arthritis Research UK. Reception to be held at the Cross House Inn, Formby. All Welcome. For enquiries please contact Coyne Brothers, 3 Old Mill Lane, Formby, 01704 873899

IDDON NELLIE

2nd February 2017
Aged 92 years
(Devoted Wife of the Late Wilfred Iddon)
Passed away peacefully in hospital with her family around her.

Nellie will be sadly missed by her Sister-In-Law Celia and Gilbert, as well as her Nephews and Nieces and Great-Nephews and Nieces. Nellie will also be missed by her closest friends and all who knew her. Funeral service to take place at All Saints Church, Hesketh Bank on Thursday 16th February at 1:20pm, followed by committal at West Lancashire Crematorium. Flowers or donations if desired to the RSPCA. Further enquiries to Newland and Wilkinson Independent Funeral Directors, 311 Hesketh Lane, Tarleton, Lancashire, PR4 6RJ. Tel 01772 811165

PRAYERS

PRAYER TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN

Never known to fail.

O most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, faithful Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in this necessity, O Star of the Sea, help me and show me herein you are my Mother, O Holy Mary Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to succour me in my necessity.

(Make Request).

There are none that can withstand your powers. Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee (3 Times).

Sweet Mother, I place this cause in your hands (3 times).

Thank you for your mercy towards me and mine.

This prayer must be said for three days and after that the request will be granted and the prayer must be published.

MD

PRAYERS

THANKS TO ST. JUDE PRAYERS ANSWERED

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Friday 3rd February 2017

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Winners of £20 are as follows:

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15628	18208
24626	12649
24349	16483
24993	273790
298873	330884
19529	19374
20676	18789
10711	174441
80192	24857

PUBLIC NOTICES

West Lancashire Borough Council
Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 - Article 15

APPLICATION(S) FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

Application No: 2016/1290/OUT Outline - Residential development including details of access, layout and scale at Valera Ltd, Plox Brow, Tarleton.

Application No: 2017/0026/HYB Hybrid application on 0.8 hectares on land north of School Lane, Haskayne, seeking outline planning permission with all matters reserved for the demolition of modern, general purpose, agricultural buildings and the redevelopment of the site for residential use including a new access to Moor Farm House, plus full permission for the change of use of a traditional agricultural building to a single dwelling (Use Class C3) which fronts on to School Lane at Moor Farm, 48 School Lane, Downholland.

Application No: 2017/0065/FUL Proposed agricultural building and highway improvements to northern site access junction with Boundary Meanygate at Moss Side Farm, Moss Side Lane, Tarleton.

The proposed development affects a right of way to which Part III of the Wildlife and Countryside Act

The applications are available for viewing on the Council's website www.westlancs.gov.uk/planning. Alternatively, the application can be viewed during normal office hours at 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk and at 1st Floor, The Concourse, Skelmersdale. If you wish to comment on the proposal you can do so via the Council's web site, by e.mail to plan.apps@westlancs.gov.uk or in writing to Development and Regeneration Services, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk, but these must be received within 21 days of the date of this notice quoting the application no. Any comments made will be available for public inspection.

Applications for Minor Commercial and Householder Development

In the event that an appeal is made against a decision of the Council to refuse to grant planning permission for the proposed development, and that appeal then proceeds by way of the expedited procedure under the written representations procedure, any representations made to the Council about an application will be passed to the Secretary of State and there will be no opportunity to make further representations.

John R Harrison DipEnvP., MRTPI Dated: 8th February 2017
Director of Development and Regeneration PDNOT934

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION
Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015
NOTICE UNDER ARTICLE 13 PUBLICATION FOR APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING PERMISSION
PLANNING APPLICATION NO - LCC/2017/0016
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT - VARIATION OF CONDITION 14 OF PLANNING PERMISSION LCC/2014/0047 SO THAT PERMITTED NOISE LIMITS DURING PLUGGING AND ABANDONMENT OF THE WELL AND RESTORATION ARE LIMITED TO 55dB(A) BETWEEN 08.00 AND 21.00 AND 42dB(A) BETWEEN 21.00 AND 08.00 WHEN MEASURED AT THE BOUNDARY OF THE NEAREST RESIDENTIAL RECEPTOR. AT BECCONSALL EXPLORATION SITE, OFF BONNY BARN ROAD, HUNDRED END, BANKS

I give notice that Cuadrilla Resources is applying to the Lancashire County Council for the above development.

Members of the public may inspect copies of the application, plans and documents at Lancashire County Council, Development Management Group, County Hall, PO Box 100, Preston, PR1 0LD or at the Planning Department, West Lancashire Borough Council,

Council Offices, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk, during normal office hours until 01 March 2017.The application can also be viewed on the County Council's website **planningregister.lancashire.gov.uk**

Anyone who wishes to make representations about this application should write to the County Council by 01 March 2017 at the above address, via email DevCon@lancashire.gov.uk or via 'Have your Say' on the County Council's website.

Information regarding the decision will be available on the website within 5 working days of the decision. Details on how to speak at the Development Control Committee are also available on the web page

Andy Mullaney, Head of Service for Planning and Environment
On Behalf of Lancashire County Council
Date: 8 February 2017

www.lancashire.gov.uk — Lancashire County Council

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The appalling crash test results of the Metro sent shockwaves through the car industry

NORMALLY saving lives involves noble things like vaccinations, charity fundraising and the Heimlich Manouvere. But you wouldn't think deliberately destroying a Metro would have the same effect.

20 years ago that's exactly what happened, when some chaps with clipboards and clever cameras gave one (well, a Rover 100 if we're being picky) a 30mph introduction to a concrete block. Not for a laugh, but in the interests of scientific research. What they discovered sent shockwaves through the car industry.

The car wreckers in question belonged to an organisation called Euro NCAP, which has just celebrated its 20th birthday. Their mission was to mark as many new cars as possible with independent safety ratings, and they gave the poor Metro a miserable one star out of five. The resultant drop in sales meant Rover dropped it altogether a few months later, and ever since Euro NCAP's findings have been taken very seriously indeed.

The results kept coming. 1990s Volvos weren't as indestructible as pub wisdom had long dictated. The original Ford Focus wasn't as good at protecting pedestrians as the Escort that preceded it. The old Chrysler Voyager was a deathtrap, and the G-Wiz electric car might as well have been made out of cardboard after its appalling crash test performance. Even today Euro NCAP is still unafraid of ruffling the car industry's feathers, giving Ford's latest Mustang a dismal two stars when five is increasingly the norm.

But your car's almost certainly safer as a result. Ever since Renault picked up the first five star rating for its Laguna back in 2001 – and paraded it on every TV, magazine and newspaper ad it could as a result – manufacturers have engaged in a sort of safety arms race to ensure they're top dog.

Multiple airbags, ABS, autonomous braking, whiplash-responsive headrests and cleverly designed crumple zones are no longer novel additions to car brochures. They're everyday motoring addenda, and anyone who doesn't offer them is shown up in the test results as cheapskates who aren't that bothered about customer safety.

It's impossible to calculate how many lives Euro NCAP's boffins have saved by forcing car companies to smarten up to avoid embarrassing crash test results, but it's fair to say you stand a much better chance of surviving a 30mph shunt in a new Clio (a five star car) than you would in its 1997 equivalent (just two stars).

So it's worth thinking about Euro NCAP's experts next time you go out for a spin. They have genuinely moved motoring on – and all it took was one utterly ruined Metro.

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- Air Con
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- Air Con
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- Alloys
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- New Alloys
- Priv Glass

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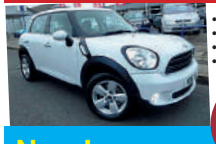

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*Conquest contribution of £500 only for non Citroen part exchange vehicles. 4.9% APR Personal Contract Purchase offer on Citroen C3 PuteTech 68 manual Feel, based on £189 deposit followed by 47 monthly repayments of £189.92 Personal Contract Purchase offer on Citroen C1 Feel. Based on 47 monthly rentals of £149.88. Personal Contract Purchase offer on Citroen C4 Cactus 82 Feel. Based on £999 deposit 47 monthly repayments of £199.05 with an agreed 6,000 miles per annum. At the end of the Personal Contract Purchase there are three options (I) Pay the optional final payment to own the vehicle (II) Part Exchange the vehicle, where equity is available or (II) return the vehicle. * Terms and Conditions apply. Finance subject to status. 18's and over. Guarantee/indemnity may be required. Offer subject to availability. Standard emissions and vehicle data. Chapel House are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority for consumer credit purposes Chapel House Motor Co Ltd (ref 668178), Chapel House Southport Ltd (ref 683972) and is an Appointed Representative of AutoProtect (MBI) Ltd (ref 312143) for insurance mediation purposes. You can check this on the FCA website register.fca.org.uk/ or by contacting the FCA on 0800 111 6768. Chapel House is a Credit Broker and not a lender and work with a limited number of providers. Registered Office 603-609 Liverpool Road, Ainsdale, Southport, Merseyside PR8 3NG Registered in England 1248452, 8437125 and 1376689.

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Amount of Credit	£10,031	APR	4.8%

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Deposit Allowance	£1,600	Optional Final Payment	£4,440
Minimum Part Exchange	£500	Interest Charges	£1,154.60
Customer Deposit	£169	Total Amount Payable	£14,698.06
Amount of Credit	£11,274.46	APR	3.7%

£500 MINIMUM PART EXCHANGE

£399 DEPOSIT AND £199 PER MONTH

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Deposit Allowance	£2,000	Optional Final Payment	£6,080
Minimum Part Exchange	£500	Interest Charges	£1,474.12
Customer Deposit	£399	Total Amount Payable	£18,378.06
Amount of Credit	£14,004.94	APR	3.7%

£500 MINIMUM PART EXCHANGE

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Deposit Allowance	£1,800	Optional Final Payment	£4,750
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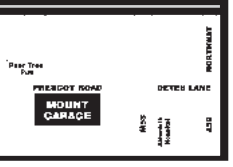

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Youthful team unable to break down high-flyers

Whitby Town 1
Skelmersdale United 0

NEW manager Alan Rogers suffered defeat in his first game in charge as a youthful Skelmersdale United side couldn't break down high-flying Whitby Town.

Whitby went on the attack in the early stages and soon Skelmersdale goalkeeper Chris Cheetham made a good save from a Matty Tymon header.

Skelmersdale had a turn on the offensive in the 11th minute, a neat exchange of passes between Dean Shacklock and Mamudo Dabo put Nathan Randell free on the left of the box, but the striker who is on loan from Wigan Athletic saw his shot go over the crossbar.

The game was taking shape with Whitby on attack and Skem defending well and hitting the hosts on the break.

Whitby left-back Danny McWilliams caused Skem a few problems during the afternoon especially with his propensity to get forward quickly. One of his crosses on the half-hour resulted in Phil Mooney twice clearing off the Skelmersdale goal-line in the space of about three seconds.

Twice on 35 and 38 minutes Skelmersdale did have to rely on luck as Whitby hit the post on both occasions.

The first a stroll forward by defender Luke Blythway resulted in a low effort from 25 yards hitting Cheetham's right hand upright, the latter a glaring miss by Tymon after Steve Snaith gave him a near tap-in.

The blank score sheet at the interval was partly down to Whitby's poor finishing, but it was also down some real tenacity from the Skelmersdale youngsters.

Soon after half-time Cheetham made a good near-post save from Dave Carson, before in the 54th minute Whitby broke the deadlock. Tymon cleverly stroked the ball down the inside-left channel and Carson cut in from the left before side-footing a precise effort low nto the Skelmersdale net.

Skelmersdale continued to scrap hard and 12 minutes from the end Jack Watts lifted a free-kick into the penalty area, the ball was headed back and Randell connected with a volley that home goalkeeper Shane Bland was glad to parry away.

Twice late on Cheetham made saves from Snaith, but if either effort had gone into the net it would have been cruel.

Against the odds Skelmersdale had just been edged out by the play-off chasers but it was anything but the thumping many pundits expected them to get.

Skelmersdale's Mamadu Dabo (in ellow) makes a challenge at Whitby. Picture by John Driscoll

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Linnets put up a spirited effort after conceding first-minute goal

Report by **Neil Leatherbarrow**

Burscough 0
Trafford 3

BURSCOUGH were made to pay for a slow start after conceding a goal just 58 seconds into the match.

To their credit though Burscough showed for remaining 89 minutes that they might have the spirit within themselves to climb to safety.

After 25 seconds the ball went bouncing into the penalty area, Linnets goalkeeper Richie Mottram was maybe caught cold and faced with a one on one with Trafford's Kinesley Williams, the ball went for a corner.

The corner kick was driven in by former FC United star Liam Brownhill and at the second attempt his former FC United team mate Lee Neville blasted home the opener.

Trafford came close to scoring again when a Brownhill free-kick was headed wide by Josh Granite and a header from Ashley Woods brought a superb save from Mottram.

In the 33rd minute Trafford needed a bit of luck to retain their lead when a Burscough corner was lifted beyond the far post. James Ellina-Jefferies headed the ball back into the box and Adam Gilchrist fired in a header that was scrambled off the goal-line.

Within three minutes Trafford had given themselves a cushion after Williams brought the save of match out of Mottram and the ball went for a corner.

Dead-ball king Brownhill took the corner and again found Neville. Mottram saved again this time but the keeper was unlucky to see his rebound go to striker Aaron Burns, who made no mistake from close range.

Burscough should have halved the lead seconds after the interval as captain Phil Bannister sent a cross into the heart of the Trafford area, substitute Callum Scott ran onto the ball and headed just over the crossbar with literally his first touch of the game after coming on as sub at half-time.

Five minutes later Burscough went close again, Kevin Lettany set up Elliott Nevitt but the Linnets' number 10 shot wide.

Trafford put the game beyond Burscough's reach on 64 minutes. Brownhill was again the provider, from a corner headed on and Burns was able to flick the third goal into the Linnets net.

Burscough finished with 10 men after an impetuous challenge by Nevitt saw him receive a red card.

Both clubs now face vital home games

BOTH Skelmersdale United and Burscough have important home games this Saturday, *writes Neil Leatherbarrow.*

Skelmersdale supporters will have the opportunity to view recently appointed manager Alan Rogers' newly-assembled side, while Burscough face Goole - the team immediately above them in the league.

So they are vital games for differing reasons and both kick off at 3pm.

Skelmersdale entertain a Halesowen side who haven't won at the Uretek Stadium on any of their previous visits and have only won three out their 13 away games this season. Alan Rogers fielded seven teenagers at Whitby, but commented in an interview on the Skelmersdale United website this week that he is expecting to bring in a couple of more experienced players this week.

Skelmersdale are a "work in progress team" but progress is taking place and they will get better as the season goes on.

Rogers hasn't been helped by his experienced players leaving the club, with the highly-respected Kenny Strickland, Peter Wylie and Alex Davies signing for neighbours Marine.

Chairman Paul Griffiths stated his support for Rogers when he said: "We do believe that Alan can turn around the clubs fortunes, we would hope that the footballing loving supporters of Skem can rally round and give the youngsters some much needed encouragement."

Burscough are expected to make a couple of new signings this week as they prepare for what is a win at all costs encounter.

Information from a source close to the club tells us that among their new signings are likely to be brothers Joe and Josh Nicholson from Skelmersdale United, plus the possibility of another striker who would be something of a 'coup' for Burscough.

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